



**NEW YORK STATE**  
Unified Court System

# 2016 ANNUAL REPORT



# THE NEW YORK STATE UNIFIED COURT SYSTEM 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

## REPORT OF THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATOR OF THE COURTS

For the Calendar Year January 1 through December 31, 2016

### Court of Appeals

**Janet DiFiore**  
*Chief Judge*

**Eugene F. Pigott Jr.**  
*Senior Associate Judge*

**Jenny Rivera**  
*Associate Judge*

**Sheila Abdus-Salaam**  
*Associate Judge*

**Leslie E. Stein**  
*Associate Judge*

**Eugene M. Fahey**  
*Associate Judge*

**Michael J. Garcia**  
*Associate Judge*

### Chief Administrator of the Courts

**Lawrence K. Marks**

### Administrative Board of the Courts

**Janet DiFiore**  
*Chair*

**Peter Tom**

**Randall T. Eng**

**Karen K. Peters**

**Gerald J. Whalen**

### New York State Unified Court System

**Michael V. Coccoma**  
*Deputy Chief Administrative Judge,  
Courts Outside New York City*

**Fern A. Fisher**  
*Deputy Chief Administrative Judge,  
New York City Courts*

**Ronald P. Younkens**  
*Executive Director, Office of Court  
Administration*

### Administrative Judges New York City

**Peter H. Moulton**  
*Civil Matters, First Judicial District*

**Michael Obus**  
*Criminal Matters, First Judicial District*

**Lawrence Knipel**  
*Civil Matters, Second Judicial District*

**Matthew J. D'Emic**  
*Criminal Matters, Second  
Judicial District*

**Jeremy Weinstein**  
*Civil Matters, Eleventh Judicial District*

**Joseph Zayas**  
*Criminal Matters, Eleventh  
Judicial District*

**Douglas E. McKeon**  
*Civil Matters, Twelfth Judicial District*

**Robert Torres**  
*Criminal Matters, Twelfth  
Judicial District*

**Judith N. McMahon**  
*Civil Matters, Thirteenth  
Judicial District*

**Stephen J. Rooney**  
*Criminal Matters, Thirteenth  
Judicial District*

**Jeanette Ruiz**  
*NYC Family Court*

**Melissa C. Jackson**  
*NYC Criminal Court*

### Administrative Judges Outside New York City

**Thomas A. Breslin**  
*Third Judicial District*

**Vito C. Caruso**  
*Fourth Judicial District*

**James C. Tormey**  
*Fifth Judicial District*

**Molly Reynolds Fitzgerald**  
*Sixth Judicial District*

**Craig J. Doran**  
*Seventh Judicial District*

**Paula L. Feroletto**  
*Eighth Judicial District*

**Alan D. Scheinkman**  
*Ninth Judicial District*

**Thomas A. Adams**  
*Nassau County*

**C. Randall Hinrichs**  
*Suffolk County*

**Richard E. Sise**  
*Court of Claims*

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE



The year 2016 began with the passing of our beloved former Chief Judge, Judith S. Kaye. Chief Judge Kaye's imprint is indelible. She was a national leader in problem-solving justice, jury reform, and so many other areas. Her contributions affect the way our court system functions every single day.

The year also began with the investiture of our outstanding new leader, Chief Judge Janet DiFiore. Chief Judge DiFiore's mission from day one was clear: "Achieve and maintain excellence throughout the court system." She began her tenure by announcing the "Excellence Initiative," an ongoing commitment to provide the very best service possible to the public, and to ensure that the New York State Judiciary remains a shining jewel in the crown of state government.

This report summarizes what has been achieved in year one of the Excellent Initiative, and also reviews the broad range of services provided by the New York State courts. I hope you will take the time to learn more about our programs and initiatives in this, the 39th edition of the Annual Report of the Chief Administrator of the Courts.

The report would not be complete without acknowledging that none of what is discussed below would have been possible without the hard work and dedication of New York's judges and our non-judicial staff, or the support and cooperation of the bar, countless justice agencies and other stakeholders, and our partners in the Executive and Legislative branches.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Lawrence K. Marks". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Lawrence" being the most prominent part.

Lawrence K. Marks

*This 2016 edition of the Annual Report of the Chief Administrator of the Courts has been submitted to the Governor and Legislature in accordance with Section 212 of the Judiciary Law.*

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# YEAR IN REVIEW: A SUMMARY OF 2016 HIGHLIGHTS

Our perpetual goal of providing the citizens of New York with a just, fair, and efficient system of justice was heightened in 2016 with the mandate of our new Chief Judge: Do a better job today than we did yesterday, and do better tomorrow than we did today. In 2016, that mindset permeated our entire operation, from top to bottom. With that prism in mind, this report is a granular view of our efforts, achievements and aspirations.

## ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE

Immediately after taking office, Chief Judge Janet DiFiore established, as her top priority, achieving and maintaining excellence in every facet of court operations: speeding the justice process, eliminating backlogs and delays, and introducing a range of reforms to improve the broader administration of justice and provide New Yorkers with the first-rate services they expect and deserve from their court system. Her “Excellence Initiative” is a top-to-bottom examination of court operations focused on improving the courts’ ability to ensure the just and timely resolution of all matters that come before them – the core, fundamental obligation of the Judicial Branch of government. A prevailing theme of the Excellence Initiative is that “justice delayed is justice denied.” Citizens deserve to have their cases heard and resolved in a fair, timely, efficient and cost-effective manner. In 2016, considerable progress was achieved—with the full knowledge and understanding that excellence is a never-ending commitment.

In measuring progress, the courts use a number of key performance benchmarks, including “standards and goals,” the benchmark for the timely resolution of different categories of cases: in criminal cases, 90 days for misdemeanors and 180 days (from filing of an indictment) for felonies; in civil cases in Supreme Court, 23 months for expedited cases, 27 months for standard cases, 30 months for complex cases, and 12 months for contested matrimonial cases. Cases that have not been resolved within these established benchmarks are considered “over standards and goals.” It is the aim of the Excellence Initiative to have as few cases over standards and goals as possible.

Chief Judge DiFiore and Chief Administrative Judge Marks meet with each Administrative Judge on a regular basis to discuss strategies to improve case processing times, disposition rates and trial capacity, and each of the Administrative Judges has implemented measures to improve productivity and eliminate case backlogs and devised plans for future improvement, with the logistical and technical support of the Office of Court Administration (OCA): OCA’s Division of Technology (DoT) created a new case management “dashboard” containing up-to-date information on every trial court’s inventory of cases. Progress reports document which courts showed improvement during 2016, and priority reports provided direction on what needs to be improved in 2017.

After a year of focused attention on operational issues, the New York State courts are performing better as a whole – managing cases more efficiently and reducing case delays and backlogs – as shown by the following examples:

- The backlog of the oldest misdemeanor cases in the Bronx was reduced by 50 percent.
- In Queens County, there was a 42 percent reduction in felony cases over two years old, while in Suffolk County the number of cases over standards and goals was reduced by 58 percent.
- For the first time in many years, more Family Court cases were disposed than were filed in the Ninth Judicial District.
- In the Seventh Judicial District the number of pending civil cases declined by 23 percent.

The Excellence Initiative is off to a promising start. But this is not a short-term project. Achieving excellence in all that we do will require an ongoing commitment, and in future annual reports we will continue to document our efforts to ensure that New Yorkers have the court system that they deserve.

## ENSURING ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Poverty, language, and disabilities are just some of the barriers to access to the courts. Each year 1.8 million New Yorkers attempt to navigate the state courts without counsel because they lack the resources to retain an attorney, even on disputes that threaten their homes, subsistence benefits or other essentials of life. In addition, it is estimated that two million New Yorkers are not fluent in English. Many other have disabilities that complicate, if not thwart, their access to the courts.

The New York courts are committed to ensuring that all New Yorkers have meaningful access to the courts, regardless of income, language, disability or other barrier. This section of the report highlights key programs and initiatives designed to ensure that access.

### ACCESS TO JUSTICE PROGRAM

The Access to Justice Program, under the leadership of Judge Fern A. Fisher, takes a multifaceted approach to the delivery of legal services, assistance and information to provide an array of court, community and internet-based programs and services, such as the CourtHelp website, Do-It-Yourself (DIY) Form document assembly programs, CourtHelp Centers, and court-based volunteer lawyer and non-lawyer programs.

In 2016, the program made considerable progress toward narrowing the justice gap: The CourtHelp website attracted more than one million visitors and 38 million page views; more than 11,000 litigants received advice or representation from volunteers; and 215,000 litigants were assisted in CourtHelp Centers

For more information about the Access to Justice Program's volunteer attorney efforts, Do-It-Yourself tools for unrepresented litigants and other initiatives, view the program's 2016 annual report online at: [www.nycourts.gov/ip/nya2j/pdfs/NYA2J\\_2016report.pdf](http://www.nycourts.gov/ip/nya2j/pdfs/NYA2J_2016report.pdf).

### PERMANENT COMMISSION ON ACCESS TO JUSTICE

In 2010, more than 90 percent of low-income New Yorkers appeared in court in civil matters without counsel. Each court proceeding posed potentially devastating consequences that went beyond the individuals and families involved—a family facing eviction, a veteran unable to collect service disability, children unable to attend a school responsive to their special needs, a woman trying to escape an abusive relationship or a father whose medical claims were denied. These consequences were felt in our courts and our communities throughout the Empire State.

In response to this crisis, then-Chief Judge Jonathan Lippman created the Task Force to Expand Access to Civil Legal Services in New York. The Permanent Commission on Access to Justice was established in 2015, with the enactment of Part 51.1 of the Rules of the Chief Judge (22 NYCRR § 51.1), to continue the vital mandate of the Task Force to Expand Access to Civil Legal Services in New York.

Under the leadership of Helaine M. Barnett, former President of the federal Legal Services Corporation, the Permanent Commission on Access to Justice, has worked hard to reduce the number of unrepresented people in our civil courts. The year 2016 represented an important milestone in our efforts, as Chief

Judge DiFiore became the new, and enthusiastic, champion for this cause. With her support, the Judiciary reached the funding goal set in 2010 of \$100 million in dedicated state funds for civil legal services. That funding is estimated to yield a return of \$1 billion—\$10 for every dollar invested in civil legal services—to the New York State treasury.

### **JUDICIARY CIVIL LEGAL SERVICES (JCLS) PROGRAM**

The JCLS Program helps low income New Yorkers access legal assistance in dealing with the essentials of life—housing, family matters, subsistence income and access to healthcare and education.

In fiscal year 2015-16, 78 civil legal services providers handled 453,908 cases, serving a total of 1,879,056 individuals and benefiting 3,178,684 persons. These numbers continue to increase in comparison to the prior four years. The increase can be attributed in large part to the rise in JCLS grant funding during this span from \$12.5 million to \$70 million. The increased funding enabled providers to hire additional staff, launch new initiatives, partner with outside communities and other civil legal services programs, enhance training and outreach and better respond to the needs of the communities they serve.

In May 2016, JCLS funding of \$85 million was allocated to a total of 83 providers serving low-income New Yorkers in every county in the state. Contracts were awarded for a multi-year term of January 1, 2017 through December 31, 2021.

In response to a request for proposals or “RFP,” the JCLS Oversight Board received and considered 536 total applications from 90 applicants for new funding. Among these applicants were 10 providers who had not previously requested JCLS funding. The Oversight Board awarded grants to 83 of the 90 applicants.

As part of its Contract Monitoring Plan, in FY 2016-17, OCA’s Division of Professional and Court Services conducted desk reviews, desk audits and site visits to a number of Judiciary Civil Legal Services providers. The purpose of the contract monitoring plan is to ensure that funds are not being lost to fraud, waste or mismanagement.

### **PRO BONO SCHOLARS PROGRAM**

The Pro Bono Scholars Program allows students in their final year of law school to devote their last semester of study to performing pro bono service for the poor through an approved externship program, law school clinic, legal services provider, law firm or corporation.

The Pro Bono Scholars Program represents a partnership among the Judiciary, law schools and the profession with the goal of revitalizing legal education to adapt to society’s changing needs. This new option in legal education will simultaneously better assist students in preparing for the actual practice of law, impress upon them the value of public service at the start of their careers and provide much-needed assistance to those of limited means in our state.

Students who are accepted into the Pro Bono Scholars Program will spend 12 weeks working full time in a pro bono placement, while also completing an academic component at their law school. Students will have the opportunity to develop quality mentoring relationships and receive invaluable practical training under the supervision of both a practicing lawyer and a faculty member. As an additional benefit for participating in the program, students will be permitted to take the New York bar examination in February of their final year of study, before they graduate. Upon successful completion of the program and any other graduation requirements, students will be awarded their Juris Doctor degree and be admitted to practice as soon as practicable after graduation, accelerating the pace at which they can enter the legal market as licensed attorneys.



The first of its kind in the country, the program is designed to reinforce the legal profession's commitment to a culture of service while generating substantial hours of pro bono work each year on behalf of our state's most vulnerable citizens.

## **LEGAL HAND**

Legal Hand is a network of storefront information centers that train community volunteers to provide free legal information, assistance and referrals to help low-income New Yorkers resolve issues that affect their lives in areas such as housing, family, immigration, divorce, domestic violence and benefits. Legal Hand is run by the Center for Court Innovation in collaboration with three legal services providers: The Legal Aid Society, Legal Services NYC and the New York Legal Assistance Group. Legal Hand has three storefront information centers in New York City: Brownsville, Crown Heights and Jamaica.

Legal Hand operates out of accessible storefront locations that allow people to easily drop in for assistance without making an appointment. Volunteers provide simple and effective information services that help people prevent issues from becoming serious legal problems down the line. Legal Hand volunteers can turn to an on-site attorney or a volunteer coordinator for support or to provide a referral to the appropriate services if a visitor has an emergency issue. Legal Hand also conducts legal information workshops for the community and for volunteers as part of the effort to promote legal empowerment and knowledge.

The program draws its volunteers from the communities it serves and provides them with thorough training on both substantive issues and the resources available to help those in need. Volunteers come from many different backgrounds. Legal Hand aims to empower its volunteers by providing them with the skills and knowledge that will help them assert their own rights and be a resource to friends and family. Since late 2015, Legal Hand has held over 100 community legal workshops, trained over 350 volunteers and has assisted over 6,500 visitors. Legal Hand has also conducted a legal needs survey in Crown Heights, and is hoping to expand both research and services in the next year.

## **POVERTY JUSTICE SOLUTIONS**

Poverty Justice Solutions is a two-year fellowship for recent law school graduates to represent low income New Yorkers in eviction prevention cases. Poverty Justice Solutions is a project of the Center for Court Innovation.

Poverty Justice Solutions collaborates with over 20 legal services providers in New York City to house fellows as employees of the agency, and provides them with funding and professional development support, with an emphasis on innovative ideas on improving access to justice. Poverty Justice Solutions also fosters relationships with other organizations in order to contribute to conversations about housing court issues in New York City, such as offering testimony before the New York City Council on right-to-counsel legislation.

Poverty Justice Solutions maintains relationships with city and state agencies, such as the Human Resources Administration Office of Civil Justice, and promotes the exchange of ideas and knowledge, through programs such as the Future of Housing Court panel discussion at Fordham Law School, a discussion with Housing Court Chief Administrative Judge Jean Schneider and a number of podcasts discussing housing court issues.



Since the start of the project in 2015, there have been 39 Poverty Justice Solutions fellows, with an additional 20 fellows beginning in the summer of 2017. In the last year, Poverty Justice Solutions fellows have provided critical legal representation to more than 4,000 New Yorkers, with an eviction prevention success rate of over 85 percent.

## **LANGUAGE ACCESS SERVICES**

New York State is one of the most linguistically diverse states in the nation. Millions of New Yorkers are not fluent in English, and many others are deaf or hard of hearing.

To ensure that these New Yorkers have meaningful access to justice, the New York State Courts employ approximately 300 staff interpreters, and retain the use of several hundred per diem or freelance interpreters. In 2016, these interpreters provided over 510,000 hours of interpreting services. In 2016, interpreting services were provided in 115 languages, ranging from Albanian to Zarma. Spanish is the most-frequently requested language, followed by Mandarin, Russian, Haitian Creole, Arabic and Cantonese. There is also a high demand for interpreters in Polish, Korean, French, Bengali, American Sign Language and Hebrew. Recently, the courts have seen an increase in requests for languages from Central and South America, Africa and Southeast Asia.

In areas of the state where there is a shortage of interpreters, courts are encouraged to use UCS Remote Interpreting – where the interpreter appears by video or telephone from another NYS court or OLA – to avoid delays and ensure provision of a qualified court interpreter. The UCS Remote Interpreting program has been in place since 2005. In 2016, it was used to provide interpreters for over 600 cases.

Language Line, a commercial interpreting service, is now available statewide in order to provide remote interpreting services in non-courtroom venues such as Help Centers, clerks' counters, and other points of contact where encounters are typically brief and sporadic, and where the provision of in-person interpreters would be difficult or time consuming to arrange. Court personnel have found the telephonic interpreting service efficient and easy to use. Court users spend less time waiting for an interpreter and more time getting their questions answered and matters filed.

Finally, in 2015, the New York courts piloted a bilingual English-Spanish order of protection. The program has now been expanded to Family Courts and Integrated Domestic Violence parts statewide, and bilingual orders are available in Spanish, Russian and Chinese, and by the end of 2016, more than 9,000 bilingual orders of protection have been issued by New York courts.

## **ACCESS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

The New York Judiciary is fully committed to ensuring that the courts are fully accessible to persons with disabilities. Toward that end, each courthouse in the State has a designated liaison who is charged with the responsibility of assisting litigants, jurors, attorneys, and other court users obtain the accommodations needed to ensure that they can meaningfully participate in the justice system. OCA has also appointed a Statewide ADA Coordinator to provide training and policy guidance in this important area. In addition, the courts work closely with local governments, which are by state law responsible for providing and maintaining facilities for the courts, to eliminate physical barriers to access to the justice system.

# IMPROVING CASE OUTCOMES FOR FAMILIES IN CRISIS

## CHILD WELFARE COURT IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

**T**he Child Welfare Improvement Project (CWCIP) is a federally funded program that strives to uphold the Family Court's mandate to promote the safety, permanency and well-being of abused and neglected children.

In 2016, the Child Welfare Court Improvement Project (CWCIP) continued its collaborative work in support of the Family Court's mandate to promote the safety, permanency and well-being of abused and neglected children by providing resources and technical assistance at the intersection of the legal/judicial and child welfare systems. CWCIP continues to maintain its focus on providing and supporting the consumption of data in order to foster multi-system continuous quality improvement (CQI) in the 20 counties with the largest foster care populations. The most recent statewide Child Welfare Court Data Metrics report can be found at [www.nycourts.gov/ip/cwcip/Publications/2015CWCIPDataMetrics-NYS.pdf](http://www.nycourts.gov/ip/cwcip/Publications/2015CWCIPDataMetrics-NYS.pdf). The project is engaged in several hallmark initiatives designed to improve outcomes at the individual case and systems level.

## PARTNERSHIP FOR YOUTH JUSTICE

The Partnership for Youth Justice is an inter-branch collaborative focused on improving outcomes for youth in the justice system. It was formed to implement the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. The Partnership is co-chaired by the Hon. Edwina Richardson-Mendelson of the New York City Family Court along with senior managers from the state's Division of Criminal Justice Services and Office of Children and Family Services. Through the Partnership, UCS engages in inter-branch collaboration to promote reforms consistent with shared objectives.

## CHILDREN'S CENTERS PROGRAM

The court system's Children's Centers Program oversees a statewide network of drop-in child care centers with a two-pronged mission: providing quality child care to youngsters while their parents are in court; and connecting children and families to vital services designed to improve their life chances. During their stay at the centers, youngsters engage in activities designed to encourage a life-long love of reading. More than 34,000 children visited the Children's Centers in 2016. In addition to providing a safe haven, the Children's Centers provide a vehicle for connecting children and families with vital services (e.g., early childhood health, educational and nutritional benefits, including food stamps) to which they and their families are entitled.

For the fifth consecutive year, referrals to food pantries and food assistance programs outpaced referrals to other services. Referrals to child care and Head Start programs were the second most frequently made. Many caregivers indicate that they have never left their child in the care of anyone else prior to utilizing the Children's Center in the court. Center staff play a critical role in introducing early childhood learning environments to caregivers, allowing them to grow more comfortable with accessing community-based child care.

## PERMANENT JUDICIAL COMMISSION ON JUSTICE FOR CHILDREN

The Permanent Judicial Commission on Justice for Children was established in 1988 to improve the lives of children involved with the New York State courts. At first targeting primarily infants and younger children, the Commission has devoted much of its recent efforts to adolescents in the foster care and

juvenile justice systems. The Commission is chaired by former Chief Administrative Judge A. Gail Prudenti, Dean of the Maurice A. Deane School of Law at Hofstra University and Executive Director of the Law School's Center for Children, Families and the Law. Its members include judges, lawyers, advocates, physicians, legislators and state and local officials.

The Commission utilizes a systemic methodology composed of convening stakeholders, conducting research, developing pilot projects, creating written materials and tools, presenting trainings and initiating efforts to change policy and practice. To learn more about the commission, visit: [www.nycourts.gov/justiceforchildren](http://www.nycourts.gov/justiceforchildren).

### **COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATES PROGRAM**

The Court Appointed Special Advocates Assistance Program (CASA) was established within OCA to provide programmatic guidelines, fiscal support, technical assistance and training to local CASA programs and to support Family Court's use and development of CASA programs. The program contracts with the CASA: Advocates for Children of New York State, the association representing 19 local programs throughout the state. The state CASA group assists OCA in administering the funding for programs outside New York City. OCA contracts directly to provide funding the New York City CASA program.

CASA programs provide staff and recruit, train and supervise volunteers who are appointed by Family Courts to provide unbiased, independent information to the court in child abuse and neglect cases. Local programs serve approximately 3,000 children each year. On average, each CASA volunteer donates more than 100 hours per year to their assigned cases.

CASA volunteers may meet with the child, family members, foster parents, and service providers and review reports to compile timely and thorough information about children's health, safety, well-being and permanency plans, and to monitor the implementation of court ordered service and visiting plans. The volunteers work collaboratively with legal, social service and treatment providers toward the goal of securing or maintaining safe, stable, permanent homes for children in the child welfare system.

### **OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY FOR THE CHILD CONTRACTS**

The Office of the Attorney for the Child Contracts (AFC) oversees 11 agencies that serve the legal needs of children in certain court proceedings in accordance with New York State law, giving youngsters a voice in child protective, juvenile delinquency, child custody and other matters. AFC provides training, fiscal oversight and other forms of administrative support to these agencies. [www.nycourts.gov/attorneys/childcontracts](http://www.nycourts.gov/attorneys/childcontracts).

# STOPPING THE REVOLVING DOOR

## PROBLEM-SOLVING COURTS

The Unified Court System has been a leader in the creation and expansion of problem-solving courts for over two decades. Problem-solving courts seek to address the substance use, trauma, or other underlying issues that contribute to the behaviors that bring individuals into the justice system. These courts engage in a collaborative model that includes the court and community stakeholders. Judges, court staff, prosecutors, attorneys, social service providers, probation officers and community service providers receive specialized training in best practices on various topics designed to improve outcomes for victims and litigants, while improving public safety. Problem-solving courts include drug courts, mental health courts, community courts, sex offense courts, human trafficking intervention courts, veteran courts, DWI courts and adolescent diversion programs. These courts tailor the treatment approach to each individual's underlying issue with the goal of providing tools and strategies to enable them to become a productive member of society, re-integrating with their families and communities.

The Office of Policy and Planning expanded its ongoing education and training programs for problem-solving court judges and staff in 2016. Covered topics included case management, updates on advances in scientific theory and the law, and best practice standards.

Additional information on these courts may be found at [www.nycourts.gov/problem\\_solving](http://www.nycourts.gov/problem_solving).

## DRUG TREATMENT COURTS

In 2016, Chief Administrative Judge Lawrence K. Marks, in collaboration with the Office of Policy and Planning, worked to develop an implementation strategy to support the statewide strategic plan for New York's 90 adult drug treatment courts. The plan supports evidence-based practices, enhanced accountability and effective allocation of resources in these courts. OCA is leading this effort with support from partner agencies and the Center for Court Innovation.

As part of an ongoing effort to combat the opioid epidemic, the Office of Policy and Planning, in collaboration with the Legal Action Center, produced a document titled, "Medication Assisted Treatment for Drug Courts," to help Drug Treatment Courts incorporate medication assisted treatment into their programs. The document has proved so helpful to drug courts that the National Association of Drug Court Professionals now provides copies to drug court teams at all of its trainings throughout the United States.

New York's 33 Family Treatment Courts continue to serve families and children caught in the intersection of the child welfare, family court, and chemical dependency systems. The Office of Policy and Planning is working closely with the Child Welfare Court Improvement Project (CWCIP) on a statewide system reform effort that seeks both to enhance family treatment court programs and expand their effective practices to reach all families and children in child welfare court parts. With continued federal funding support, the project piloted evidence-based practices throughout the abuse and neglect parts, provided Family Court judges with a bench card designed to promote access to treatment and implemented an early screening tool for substance use disorders. OCA is dedicated to improving outcomes for New York families impacted by substance abuse and neglect.

## **HUMAN TRAFFICKING INTERVENTION COURTS**

The Unified Court System continues to innovate and improve New York State's 11 Human Trafficking Intervention Courts (HTIC). Victims of human trafficking have unique needs and the courts continually strive to meet the challenges associated with this varied population. These courts are located in areas across New York with the greatest concentration of prostitution and other trafficking-related offenses. Judges and court staff receive training tailored to the needs of human trafficking victims, with emphasis on the effects of trauma caused to the individuals involved. The goal of these specialized courts is to give participants the tools and social service supports needed to stay out of commercial sex work. These courts link participants with social and community services including housing assistance, healthcare, immigration services, language training, education, and substance abuse treatment. Since inception, over 11,000 individuals have participated in HTIC-related treatment, with many obtaining dismissal or reduction of criminal charges after completing court-mandated programs.

## **ADOLESCENT DIVERSION PARTS**

The Adolescent Diversion Parts were created to address the specialized needs of 16 and 17- year-old youths in the criminal justice system. In 2016, New York remained one of only two states nationwide to prosecute this population as adults in the criminal courts. Adolescent Diversion courts, in partnership with criminal justice and community stakeholders, use a collaborative model to connect youths with needed services. The goal of these courts is to provide an alternative to incarceration for young offenders, and provide links to service providers to assist with substance abuse treatment, mental health services, housing, educational and vocational issues. Most of these cases are resolved with no criminal conviction or jail time, which is of great import to the future prospects of participants given the lifelong negative consequences of a conviction.

## **MENTAL HEALTH COURTS**

Mental Health Courts seek to improve public safety by addressing the treatment needs of defendants with mental illness by providing community-based treatment giving defendants the tools and support needed to avoid further criminal behavior. There are 30 Mental Health Courts in New York State, including one Mental Health Connections Court (MHCC), which provides referrals and linkages to local mental health services in jurisdictions without a formal Mental Health Court. Additionally, one new Mental Health Court is in the planning phase.

## **DRIVING WHILE INTOXICATED (DWI) COURTS**

To maximize public safety, designated DWI parts are designed to ensure timely judicial intervention, consistency of sentencing and enhanced case processing in DWI cases. DWI parts are located in counties statewide. These courts provide referrals to community-based alcohol and substance abuse treatment providers to treat the underlying addiction. There is ongoing collaboration with UCS and our partners in government to ensure appropriate judicial oversight of these critical cases.

## **VETERANS TREATMENT COURTS**

With two new Veterans Treatment Courts opened in 2016 — New York County and Staten Island — there are now 31 veterans courts in New York State. More are in the planning phases. These courts work closely with criminal justice and community stakeholders to provide assistance to justice-involved veterans, who often suffer from the physical and psychological effects of service-related trauma. Many veterans, especially those who have served in combat, exhibit post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, depression and/or addiction. In addition, veterans often lack a secure housing situation which prevents them from integrating back into society after discharge. The Veterans Mentor program, which partners each veteran with a peer mentor with specialized training, is a key element of these

courts. The court also works closely with veterans organizations, both governmental and private, to ensure veterans have access to the full range of services available. Veterans Treatment Courts provide the support needed to aid veterans transition back to civilian life.

## IMPROVING NEW YORK'S TOWN AND VILLAGE COURTS

In some respects the New York court system consists of two parts: the so-called "state-paid courts," for which the State assumed financial responsibility in the mid-1970s, and the 1,200-plus Town and Village Courts (collectively the "Justice Courts"), which were not included in the state takeover, and which to this day remain locally funded and administered.

The Justice Courts, which exist in every county in the state outside of New York City, play an important role in the state's justice system, and exercise jurisdiction over both civil and criminal cases. Many serious felonies are arraigned in Justice Courts and are thereafter transferred to a state-paid court for the balance of the case. The Justice Courts also have jurisdiction over a broad range of civil matters, including landlord-tenant disputes. Collectively the Justice Court impose more than \$250 million in fines annually.

While the Justice Courts were not included in the "state takeover" of 1976, they are subject to the general oversight of the Chief Judge and Chief Administrative Judge. To facilitate this oversight, and to generally support the work of the Justice Courts, OCA established the Office of Justice Court Support (OJCS).

OJCS is responsible for providing technical, legal and administrative support to the town and village courts. In this regard, the office creates and presents the annual education and training programs required of the justices, as well as assisting in the creation and presentation of training programs for court clerks. The creation and facilitation of education and training of the town and village courts is one of OJCS' major priorities. Relevant and pertinent training programs are created and presented each year to keep judges abreast of ever-changing laws, rules, regulations and procedures. While live programs continue to be conducted by the office four times yearly, OJCS' e-learning portal makes these training programs, and assessments associated thereto, available to the town and village judges on-line. OJCS is responsible tracking and maintaining a database containing accurate information regarding the judges' successful completion of their education and training requirements.

OJCS administers the Justice Court Assistance Program (JCAP), a grant program designed to assist local courts and municipalities with providing the necessary tools, equipment and other essential courtroom necessities to enable the courts to provide suitable and sufficient services to their communities. In its 2017-18 budget, OCA received an annual increase to the JCAP funding from \$2.5 million to \$3 million dollars. OJCS continues to administer the newly-increased JCAP program.

OJCS works closely with the numerous court clerks throughout the state creating and presenting many of their training programs at statewide venues, as well as at local sites throughout the year. In 2016, OJCS worked with the NYS Court Clerks Association in support of an amendment to the Rules of the Chief Judge requiring mandatory court clerk training for all town and village court clerks. OJCS has been tasked with developing the parameters of this new requirement for review and approval by the Chief Administrative Judge as well the creation of new training programs along with a state-wide database to identify and track clerks' completion of such training. Ensuring that this new mandatory court clerk training rule does not translate into an unfunded mandate for the local municipalities, the court clerk training programs will be video-recorded and uploaded to OJCS' online e-learning portal for review by

the court clerks. The “Operational Manual for Court Clerks” continues to be made available online to all town and village courts statewide. This manual provides court clerks, as well as those judges who do not have their own clerk, with information relating to the daily administrative and reporting responsibilities and tasks associated with the court.

OJCS worked closely with the Office of Indigent Legal Services (OILS) in relation to the Statewide Eligibility Guidelines for assigned counsel in criminal matters developed by OILS in response to a settlement arising out of a NYS Court of Appeals class action suit, *Hurrell-Harring v. New York*, wherein the high court affirmed that the right to counsel attaches at arraignment and thereafter. Training programs were coordinated and conducted with OILS for the five Hurrell-Harring counties by the October 2016 implementation date, and thereafter incorporated within OJCS’ statewide advanced training for the remaining counties with an implementation date of April 2017.

## HELPING PARTIES RESOLVE DISPUTES OUT OF COURT

### TRAINING AND OVERSIGHT OF ADR PRACTITIONERS

**T**he Court System’s Office Of Alternative Dispute And Resolution (ADR) continues to expand the array of dispute resolution options available throughout New York State. A complete listing of ADR programs is maintained on the UCS website at [www.nycourts.gov/adr](http://www.nycourts.gov/adr).

The UCS ADR Office also provides funding to the statewide network of not-for-profit community dispute resolution centers (CDRCs) that offer a wide range of dispute resolution services on matters referred by courts, municipal agencies, probation departments, police departments, social service providers and other entities. Parties may also contact CDRCs directly.

Mediation represents the majority of matters handled through CDRCs, which offer services in small claims, housing, family, divorce, child custody and minor criminal matters. Some 1,000 professionally trained mediators volunteer their services to the CDRCs. Matters referred for arbitration include consumer-merchant disputes, matrimonial property division issues and automobile Lemon Law cases.

During 2016, CDRCs served 67,118 people in 27,012 total cases, resolving 75 percent of the 15,398 cases in which dispute resolution services were provided. Family matters, including child custody, visitation and support, accounted for 24 percent of these cases.

The UCS ADR office also supports an ongoing effort to promote quality assurance among ADR professionals serving the courts and communities. One way in which the ADR office promotes quality assurance is through the approval of mediation courses pursuant to Part 146 of the Rules of the Chief Administrative Judge which establishes “Guidelines for Qualifications and Training of ADR Neutrals Serving On Court Rosters.” In 2016, the ADR Office approved three courses and re-approved four courses that reached the end of their three-year approval period.

The Mediator Ethics Advisory Committee (MEAC), staffed by the UCS ADR office is another example of the Unified Court System’s commitment to quality assurance in ADR. The MEAC receives inquiries from mediators primarily serving the Community Dispute Resolution Centers Program and publishes its opinions at [www.nycourts.gov/adr](http://www.nycourts.gov/adr).

ADR staff also organized the annual Mediation Settlement Day kick-off event, which brings together members of the legal, educational and ADR community to help raise awareness of the benefits of ADR.



## **FEE DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROGRAM**

The UCS ADR Office administers the NYS Attorney/Client Fee Dispute Resolution Program. Oversight is guided by the Board of Governors, chaired by Martha E. Gifford. Since its inception in January 1, 2002, the Fee Dispute Resolution Program has closed 12,044 cases. During 2016, local programs closed 1,089 cases, which is just slightly less than the 1,097 cases closed in 2015. Statewide, the average amount in dispute was \$15,862, which is an increase of \$2,871 from the average amount in dispute among 2015 cases.

Of the 1,089 cases closed in 2016, 573 were arbitrated; arbitrators issued awards in 416 cases. Three hundred forty-eight cases were either dismissed for lack of jurisdiction or withdrawn by the filing party. One hundred sixty-four cases were resolved outside of arbitration. Cases resolved outside of arbitration included 149 cases settled prior to arbitration or mediation and 15 mediated cases. Solo arbitrations, where less than \$10,000 was in dispute, numbered 344 while panel arbitrations, where \$10,000 or more was in dispute, totaled 229. The number of solo arbitrations has remained less than the number of panel arbitrations since the panel threshold was increased in January 2014 from \$6,000 to \$10,000. The average number of weeks from intake to disposition for Part 137 cases was 35 weeks in 2016, which represents a decrease of 13 weeks from the prior year. The Board will continue to analyze the trend of fewer panel arbitrations as compared to solo arbitrations and will look to see whether it affects the disposition time and the preservation of volunteer resources.

## **COLLABORATIVE FAMILY LAW CENTER**

The Court System's Collaborative Family Law Center (CFLC) provides qualifying divorcing couples in New York City with free alternative dispute resolution services to help reduce the pain, trauma and expense of divorce on families. The Center promotes individually-tailored, child-centered, and needs-based processes such as collaborative law and mediation before couples proceed down an adversarial path. Disputes get resolved quickly, fairly and privately, without judicial intervention. The Center provided assistance to more than 4,000 families in 2016, an average of 87 families per week. The services provided included information about divorce mediation, collaborative family law and general assistance with how to file for divorce. Cases mediated through the Collaborative Family Law Center have a 91 percent success rate in reaching settlement.


Center staff also accept referrals of contested matrimonial cases directly from the Supreme Court, offering free mediation to qualifying litigants.

In the fall of 2016, the NYC Family Court's judicial leadership, in partnership with the NYS UCS ADR Office began an early intervention mediation pilot program in a Custody and Visitation Intake Part in Kings County, with Center-staff attorney-mediators. The pilot offers an opportunity for parties to mediate the first time they appear in Court, allowing disputes to get resolved before they proceed down a more costly, adversarial path.

Center staff also provided technical assistance and support to legal service providers and local not for profits starting divorce mediation programs and to several law schools.


For more information about the Collaborative Family Law Center visit [www.nycourts.gov/ip/collablaw/index.shtml](http://www.nycourts.gov/ip/collablaw/index.shtml).

## LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY

 CA's Division of Technology (DoT) provides hardware, software, programming, Internet connectivity, database, help desk, technical education, phone, networking and other computer services for the Unified Court System. In 2016, DOT facilitated myriad technical advances:

- A Universal Case Management System (UCMS) for criminal cases was deployed in 23 local criminal courts.
- All Family Courts obtained the ability to e-sign orders; in 2016, 256,522 orders were e-signed by judges.
- Functionality for Spanish language orders of protection was added to UCMS for criminal orders.
- City Court case information is migrating to the WebCriminal website; 47 city courts statewide are online.
- Four Supreme Courts (Monroe, Oneida, Orange and Putnam) and three Surrogate Courts (Albany, Oneida and Westchester) went live with electronic filing.
- Dashboards for nearly every type of court in the state were provided to support Chief Judge DiFiore's Excellence Initiative.

## IMPROVING RECORDS MANAGEMENT

 CA'S Office of Records Management (ORM) provides records management guidance and support to all NYS Courts and Offices.

To reduce space requirements for paper records and costs for private storage, ORM encourages the disposal of records that have reached their retention requirement and to digitize records while preserving their integrity. In 2016, ORM processed 4,170 Records Disposition Request Forms resulting in the disposal of 42,281 cubic feet of paper records.

In 2016, ORM staff based at Beaver Street, NYC continued to inventory the old court records held by the New York County Clerk's Office at 31 Chambers Street in lower Manhattan. In January, UCS transferred approximately 1500 cubic feet of records, primarily of the Court of Chancery and Supreme Court of Judicature, to the New York State Archives in Albany. This transfer will ensure that the records will be stored properly and more accessible to researchers. The office is continuing the inventory of the much larger body of records of courts with a municipal focus that are housed at 31 Chambers Street. Once that inventory is complete, records will be transferred to the New York City Municipal Archives.

The Brooklyn Army Terminal Records Center pulled and processed 22,590 records requests. In addition, it received and processed 4,113 storage boxes from NYC Criminal Court.

## ENSURING ACCURACY IN CRIMINAL DISPOSITION REPORTING

**T**he Criminal Disposition Reporting Unit (CDR) assists all criminal courts in the disposition reporting process. The office fielded approximately 6,500 calls in 2016. The staff has been working with the Town and Village courts on using the various technology tools to communicate with OCA such as e-mail, Skype and Bomgar.

The unit continues to work with multiple agencies on a variety of issues: Division of Criminal Justices Services (DCJS) for missing dispositions, reporting issues and arrest problems; Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) for TSLED reporting issues; the New York State Police (NYSP) for electronic traffic ticket problems; and OCA's DoT to resolve issues and improve the technology for reporting and receiving data.

## MEETING THE NEED FOR LEGAL INFORMATION

**T**he Office of Legal Information administers legal reference programs to a diverse community of individuals seeking current legal information and research materials: the judiciary, town and village justices, non-judicial UCS employees, and those who frequent our court law libraries either in person or virtually. Legal Information staff are responsible for a statewide centralized purchase program for legal reference materials, maintain and develop databases for court appellate level records and briefs, work directly with court librarians to address the challenges facing library service to integrate and transition both staff and library researchers from traditional sources of information to a constantly increasing forum of electronic and online venues. OLI staff serve as system administrators for, and maintain, the statewide library automation system and provide training and assistance to library personnel on an as-needed basis.

In 2016, court personnel and the public who frequent our library facilities gained access to a new digital collection of e-books. The e-book collections complement our online Lexis and Westlaw databases as well as remaining print collections.

## ASSISTING GUARDIANS PROTECT VULNERABLE PERSONS

**T**he Office of Guardian and Fiduciary Services (GFS) is responsible for providing training and resources to judges, court personnel, attorneys, and other professionals throughout New York State in the area of guardianship under Article 81 of the Mental Hygiene Law and court fiduciary appointments under Part 36 of the Rules of the Chief Judge. GFS provides training to non-professionals appointed as guardians for incapacitated friends and family members through its Guardian Assistance Network (GAN) program. GAN's training, certified to meet statutory Article 81 guardianship training requirements, offers practical advice to assist lay guardians in carrying out their guardianship responsibilities. Since 2006, the program has provided live training free of charge to over 1,000 non-professionals guardians in the New York Metropolitan area, and since 2011 online to over 4,000 non-professional guardians statewide. GAN's website and staff provide lay guardians further support, resources and information.

## WORKING TO BETTER MANAGE FORECLOSURE CASES

Under the leadership of Chief Judge Janet DiFiore and as part of her Excellence Initiative, the courts continue to prioritize foreclosure case management, resulting in a 25 percent reduction in the pending foreclosure inventory in 2016. Foreclosure settlement conference procedures have been improved, bringing more uniformity, efficiency and transparency to the statewide foreclosure process. In 2016, new foreclosure settlement conference forms were developed for use statewide to assist the litigants and the court.

For the sixth year in a row, the number of New York State homeowners represented by counsel in the foreclosure settlement conference process has increased. In 2016, almost 170,000 people benefited from foreclosure-related legal services.

The Office of Policy and Planning (OPP) oversees the foreclosure inventory in order to improve case management and streamline access for litigants. In addition, OPP continues to collaborate with stakeholders and state and local government agencies on an ongoing basis.

## BUILDING ON THE SUCCESS OF NEW YORK'S COMMERCIAL DIVISION

In 1993, the Civil Branch of The New York County Supreme Court established four Commercial Parts on an experimental basis. The experiment proved successful and the Commercial and Federal Litigation Section of the New York State Bar Association recommended establishing a Commercial Division of the Supreme Court in areas where the volume of those cases warranted such a specialty court. On November 6, 1995, then Chief Judge Judith S. Kaye opened Commercial Divisions in New York and Monroe counties.

Since 1995, the Division has expanded to meet growing demand. Currently, 29 Commercial Division Justices preside in 10 different jurisdictions: Albany, Kings, Nassau, New York, Onondaga, Queens, Suffolk and Westchester counties, plus the entire Seventh and Eighth Judicial Districts. Its reputation and success has raised New York's profile as an internationally respected forum for the resolution of complex commercial disputes.

During the last four years, the Commercial Division has implemented numerous improvements to its rules, procedures and operations that have been designed to be responsive to the needs and concerns of the business community. The ultimate goal of these changes is to make the business litigation process in New York more cost-effective, consistent and expeditious, and to thereby provide a more hospitable environment for business litigation in New York State. The success of these new initiatives has been the subject of numerous articles in the press.

Additionally, the Historical Society of the New York Courts and the Commercial Division Advisory Council worked in tandem in producing a video about the Commercial Division of the New York State Supreme Court. The professionally filmed video describes the origins and evolution of the court, with glowing testimonials from no fewer than 11 general counsels of major corporations as well as judges and lawyers. The video is available on the court system's YouTube channel [www.youtube.com/watch?v=22094jkzXg0&t=1s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=22094jkzXg0&t=1s).

## MANAGING GRANTS AND CONTRACTS

The Court System's Grants and Contracts Office manages approximately 200 contracts with a total value of \$230 million a year. It is responsible for distributing as well as soliciting funding for various initiatives. In addition to the management of UCS's professional service contracts, the grants and contracts unit manages the grants awarded to the UCS.

The contracts managed by the unit fall into the following categories:

- Judiciary Civil Legal Services (83 contracts totaling \$85 million).
- Attorney for the Child (11 contracts totaling \$69 million).
- NYC Criminal Indigent Defense (6 contracts totaling \$55 million).
- Alternative Dispute Resolution (15 contracts, totaling \$5.3 million).
- Children's Centers (20 contracts totaling \$1.5 million).
- Center for Court Innovation (one consolidated contract covering 28 projects, totaling \$8 million).
- Court Appointed Special Advocates (recently consolidated from 18 contracts with individual providers to 2 contacts: NYC CASA and the State CASA Association for outside NYC, totaling \$878,075).
- Attorney-Client Fee Arbitration (four contracts totaling \$123,000).
- Lawyers Assistance Program (five contracts totaling \$255,000).
- Agricultural Mediation (one contract, with State Dispute Resolution Association for services in all rural counties of New York, \$335,000).
- Substance abuse, mental health, domestic violence, consulting and evaluation services related to grant-funded programs (45 contracts for approximately \$4.6 million annually).

The Grants and Contracts Office carefully monitors these contracts to ensure full compliance with laws, rules and protocols governing procurement, contracting, and disbursement of state funds, as well as to ensure that each vendor is delivering the contracted-for services. Among the elements of fiscal management are a vetting of the vendors prior to contracting, a thorough review of fiscal reports, including budget reconciliation reports, and on-site desk audits by Office staff. Among the elements of programmatic oversight are the review of periodic written reports submitted by the vendors, data collection, training, and site visits by Office staff.

In addition to the management of UCS's professional service contracts, the grants and contracts unit manages the grants awarded to the UCS. There are currently 57 active grants, with an aggregate value of nearly \$25 million. These grants cover a broad range of areas, including child welfare, juvenile justice, substance abuse, mental health drug treatment, domestic violence and technology projects.

# FOSTERING DIVERSITY AND FAIRNESS IN NEW YORK'S LEGAL COMMUNITY

The Unified Court System celebrates diversity and has a longstanding commitment to equal employment opportunity, the elimination of under-representation of minorities and women in the workforce, and the fair and equal treatment of minorities and women within the court system.

## FRANKLIN H. WILLIAMS COMMISSION

The Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commission is composed of judges, attorneys and court administrators appointed by the Chief Judge of the State of New York to develop strategies to make the court system more responsive to the issues of court employees of color, as well as litigants and the larger legal community, and to implement recommendations to address those issues. The Commission continues to provide conferences, seminars and workshops on issues of race, ethnic fairness and diversity. It has maintained dialogue with court administrators and others in the legal community to foster racial equity, cultural sensitivity and increased diversity.

In 2016, the Commission worked to facilitate implicit bias training for court personnel. As part of diversity and cultural sensitivity efforts in the Eighth Judicial District, the Commission contributed to implicit bias training for the chief clerk, deputy chief clerk and managers in that district. It also facilitated implicit bias training for Human Resource supervisors and managers at a conference held in Albany, and at the New York State Court Officers Academy. It is the Commission's intention to ensure that all New York State court employees receive implicit bias training.

To increase diversity in the courts and awareness of employment opportunities, the Commission is working with Office of Human Resources to develop the "Careers in the Courts" brochure. The career brochure focuses on outlining the procedure for civil service examinations for competitive positions filled through the civil service system and the non-competitive positions filled through job postings and interviews. It is intended that the booklet will increase the understanding of opportunities for employment with the courts.

The Commission continues its statewide initiative of collaborating with local bar associations to host seminars on the path to becoming a judge in districts where there is a lack of diversity on the bench. The program developed by the Commission has become a template that is easily transferable and used by local bar associations. This year, in Suffolk County, the program titled "Everything You Need to Know About Becoming a Judge" was co-sponsored with the Suffolk County Bar Association, Amistad Black Bar Association, Suffolk County Women's Bar Association and the Long Island Hispanic Bar Association.

The Commission is working to produce a documentary on its namesake, Franklin H. Williams. To facilitate the making of the documentary, the Commission has assisted with interviews of members of the original Commission that worked with attorney-statesman Franklin H. Williams. The projected release date is October 2017 to coincide with what would have been Ambassador Williams' 100th birthday.

For more information about the Commission, visit [www.nycourts.gov/ip/ethnic-fairness](http://www.nycourts.gov/ip/ethnic-fairness).

## THE NEW YORK STATE JUDICIAL COMMITTEE ON WOMEN IN THE COURTS

The New York State Judicial Committee on Women in the Courts works to secure the equal justice, equal treatment and equal opportunity that the 1986 report of the New York Task Force on Women in the Courts found were often denied women. A standing committee of the New York State's Unified Court System, the New York State Judicial Committee on Women in the Courts has a diverse membership appointed by the Chief Judge. For a list of members, follow this link: [www.nycourts.gov/ip/womeninthecourts/members.shtml](http://www.nycourts.gov/ip/womeninthecourts/members.shtml).

Working within the New York court system, the New York State Judicial Committee on Women in the Courts addresses a variety of concerns of women litigants, attorneys and court employees. In recent years, it has acted on behalf of constituencies that range from domestic violence victims to immigrant women and from sexually-harassed employees to self-represented matrimonial litigants. The committee was instrumental in the creation of a statewide network of human trafficking intervention courts.

Sixteen local gender bias and gender fairness committees address issues in particular geographic regions. Examples of the local Gender Fairness Committees' 2016 activities include:

- The Third Judicial District hosted several CLE programs, including "Language Access and Domestic Violence: Speaking the Victim's Language" and "Human Trafficking: An Upstate Perspective." The human trafficking program drew 200 people, including Attorney General Eric Schneiderman. In addition to the conference, the Third Judicial District Committee recorded three AMICI podcasts ([www.nycourts.gov/admin/amici/index.shtml](http://www.nycourts.gov/admin/amici/index.shtml)) looking at human trafficking from three perspectives including upstate generally, judicial, and law enforcement.
- The Eighth Judicial District's Committee offered civil exam prep training and review sessions to assist court employees in preparing for promotional exams and for the English Proficiency for interpreters exam. Lunch sessions were held and a lunch-and-learn program was also provided on serving the deaf and hard of hearing. Programs were recorded for later viewing on CourtNet. The Committee held an ethnic food fair to broaden cultural education.
- The Suffolk County Committee held programs to support the Children's Center, including drives for items such as books and clothing, baby wipes and diapers for the Children's Center. It also assists the Open Door Exchange, which maintains a warehouse of donated furniture where victims of domestic violence, people transitioning from homelessness or military service or those displaced after a disaster can experience the dignity of selecting their own furnishings to turn their new residence into a comfortable home.
- The New York County Supreme Court, Civil, sponsored several programs, including one featuring a presentation by a courageous victim of domestic violence who endured some 40 surgeries after her boyfriend doused her with acid. Another program featured former New York City Deputy Mayor Carol Robles Roman, president and CEO of Legal Momentum. More than 200 people attended.

Several Committees identified the lack of supervised visitation programs as a significant problem, and highlighted the need for more court-based Children's Centers with hours that match the hours of the court. Language access was also of considerable concern among committees statewide.

For more information on the local committees and their activities in 2016, see [www.nycourts.gov/ip/womeninthecourts/pdfs/2016-17-Annual-Reports.pdf](http://www.nycourts.gov/ip/womeninthecourts/pdfs/2016-17-Annual-Reports.pdf).



# ENHANCING PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING OF THE COURTS

**T**he Communications Office is the court system's liaison to the public and the media. It issues news advisories, responds to press inquiries and coordinates public education programs with government entities, the public and the bar.

The mission of strategic and technical communications is to leverage social media and other communication tools to enhance transparency, promote and demystify the court system and communicate with the public.

The court system communicates directly with the public through the following Twitter accounts:

- [NYCourtsNotice](#) - emergency notices and court closings, generally weather or infrastructure related;
- [NYCourtsCOA](#) - timely alerts on decision and daily calendar for the Court of Appeals;
- [NYAppDiv3](#) - notices on calendars and arguments at the Appellate Division, Third Department;
- [NYAppDiv4](#) - notices on calendars and arguments at the Appellate Division, Fourth Department;
- [NYSCourtsNews](#) - news and information on the courts and court system, including new initiatives and court rules;
- [NYCourtsCareers](#) - job openings, career opportunities and qualifying exams;
- [NYCourtsA2J](#) - resources that help make the court system fair and accessible to people who do not have an attorney; and
- [NYCourtsFHW](#) - news on the Franklin H. Williams Commission and efforts to promote racial and ethnic fairness.

It also produces the "Amici" podcasts, a series of online interviews with individuals and topics of interest to the legal community and the community at large. Topics ranged from the connection between animal cruelty and domestic violence to human trafficking to alternative dispute resolution. These podcasts are archived on the court system's website ([www.nycourts.gov/admin/amici/index.shtml](http://www.nycourts.gov/admin/amici/index.shtml)) and are also available in the [iTunes podcast library](#). The court system also utilizes a Facebook account at [NewYorkCourts](#), a YouTube channel at [NYS Courts](#), and an Instagram account at [NYCourts](#). In 2016, the office provided technical writing assistance on several reports while producing speeches, articles and other materials as needed for judges and the court system. It is also producing a documentary on pioneering women judges and a documentary on the life of Franklin H. Williams.

800-COURT-NY is the Unified Court System's toll-free public-information line for providing court information and assistance. In addition to the UCS website: [www.nycourts.gov](http://www.nycourts.gov) the 800# provides the public with quick and easy access to UCS services and information, while maintaining the highest levels of customer service. Calls are answered by seasoned and knowledgeable staff from UCS Law Libraries, Help Centers and OCA, with foreign language interpreter assistance also being available to callers, upon request. 800-Court-NY receives approximately 100,000 calls annually, which are routed to staff in law libraries and court offices throughout the state.

## PROMOTING INFORMED VOTER PARTICIPATION IN JUDICIAL ELECTIONS

The Judicial Campaign Ethics Center serves as a central resource on campaign ethics for judicial candidates and informs the public about judicial elections in New York State. In 2016, there were 155 candidates for state-paid elective judicial office vying for 111 seats in the general election, in addition to numerous town and village court elections. Over the course of the year, the center fielded approximately 250 ethics-related inquiries from judicial candidates and provided campaign ethics training to 178 candidates. Additionally, nearly 20,000 visitors accessed the voter guide in the period leading up to the general election. For more information, visit [www.nycourts.gov/ip/jcec](http://www.nycourts.gov/ip/jcec).

## PROMOTING PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN THE JUDICIARY'S INTEGRITY, INDEPENDENCE, AND IMPARTIALITY

The Advisory Committee on Judicial Ethics seeks to promote public confidence in the judiciary by providing ethics training and advice to full- and part-time judges and justices, as well as quasi-judicial officials such as judicial hearing officers, support magistrates and court attorney-referees. Pursuant to the Judiciary Law, actions a judge takes in accordance with an opinion issued by the Advisory Committee are "presumed proper" for purposes of any subsequent disciplinary investigation by the Commission on Judicial Conduct.

Since 1987, the Advisory Committee has issued over 3,600 opinions concerning a wide variety of ethics issues including disqualification and disclosure requirements, a judge's disciplinary obligations, permissible extrajudicial conduct, proper execution of judicial duties, as well as possible conflicts between private interests and official duties. The Advisory Committee's opinions are posted online and broadcast to the judiciary, and are often reprinted in law journals or *The Magistrate*. The Advisory Committee has also answered many thousands of informal inquiries by telephone.

All voting members are active or former judges who serve without compensation; collectively, their judicial experience covers a broad spectrum of courts throughout the state.

For more information, visit [www.nycourts.gov/ip/acje](http://www.nycourts.gov/ip/acje). Judges and quasi-judicial officials may also call the Advisory Committee's toll-free number (1-866-795-8343) to speak with the Chair, Special Counsel or Chief Counsel.

## FOSTERING EXCELLENCE IN JUDICIAL EDUCATION

**T**he Judicial Institute, located on the Elizabeth Haub Pace University School of Law campus in Westchester County, is a year-round center for education and training designed to ensure judicial excellence in New York State.

In 2016, the Judicial Institute offered judicial, quasi-judicial and court attorney training in both live and web-based formats, expanding its distance-learning programming by adding new, live broadcast courses to an already extensive course catalog which contains hundreds of programs eligible for Continuing Legal Education (CLE) credit. In 2016 alone, the Judicial Institute issued more than 23,000 CLE certificates in connection with these live and web-based programs.

Further, in January and July 2016, the Judicial Institute provided specialized live programming, including seminars for newly elected and appointed judges, as well as unique separate programs for Matrimonial Judges, Family Court Judges and Support Magistrates. The Judicial Institute also partnered with local Administrative Judges to sponsor a series of day-long regional programs around the State, including in Monroe, Broome, Erie, New York, Queens and Saratoga counties.

To provide further educational support for Administrative and Supervising Judges tasked with implementing the Excellence Initiative, the Judicial Institute held two multiple day retreats, designed and developed in conjunction with the National Center for State Courts. Other specialized programs included a two-day “Listening Conference” in Albany, which was co-sponsored by the New York Federal-State-Tribal Courts & Indian Nations Justice Forum.

For the first time in several years, the Judicial Institute held the New York Legal Education Opportunity Program (LEO), an intensive six-week summer program which assists minority, low income and economically disadvantaged college graduates in acquiring the fundamental and practical skills necessary for success in law school. This program was supported by a special grant which was facilitated by a LEO alumna.

## BUILDING FACILITIES TO MEET THE COURT SYSTEM’S EVOLVING NEEDS

**N**ew York court facilities are provided and operated by the cities and counties they serve. Since 1987, when the Court Facilities Act was passed in response to a pervasive sense that facilities were increasingly inadequate, the Unified Court System has provided financial assistance and guidance to local governments to help them meet their facility-related responsibilities. Over the years, amendments to the Act have enhanced the State’s role and increased financial assistance to localities. As a result of the Act and the related financial aid programs mentioned above, several municipalities were involved in major facility construction and renovation projects this year.

In New York City, following last year’s opening of the newly constructed state-of-the-art Staten Island Courthouse, planning began for renovation of Staten Island’s historic county courthouse and the Family Court facilities. Upon completion of these projects, the Surrogate’s, Family Court and Supreme Court’s matrimonial operations, as well as the City Civil Court, all will have up-to-date facilities. In Bronx County, the multi-phase renovations in the historic County Courthouse were completed, resulting in much

improved facilities for the civil term of the Supreme Court and the City's Civil Court. Also in the Bronx, the multi-phased renovations of the combined Family and City Criminal Court facility advanced toward completion, which is expected in early 2017.

Outside of New York City a number of counties advanced courthouse construction and renovation projects. In Nassau County, phase one of a two-phase project to convert a county-owned building into a much-needed replacement for the Family Court courthouse and the Matrimonial Center continued to advance with completion of the initial exterior phase expected in 2018. The project's second phase, finishing the building's interior, is expected to be completed in the fall of 2019. In Westchester County, work was completed on a new Family Court satellite facility within the City of Yonkers. The new facility opened in the spring of 2016. In Orange County, work continued on the rehabilitation and restoration of the County Court facilities in Goshen, which were closed following the damaging storms of 2011. This project is on schedule for completion at the end of 2017 and will provide a completely restored Supreme Court facility at the County Government Center in Goshen.

In Ulster, the county took steps towards providing a new Family Court facility through a public referendum which approved relocation of the Family Court to an existing county-owned building just outside the City of Kingston. A design consultant was selected for the project and preliminary planning is expected to begin in early 2017 with construction to start later that year. In Warren County construction continued on a multi-phase project that will provide a new Family Court facility adjacent to the existing County Court facilities.

Significant steps were taken to address City Court facilities as well. In the City of Hudson, renovations began on a building that will be converted into a new City Court facility and Police Headquarters with completion expected in early 2017. The City of Troy began work on phase one of a two phase project which will result in an additional courtroom within their City Court facility. This project is expected to be completed in mid-2017. The city of Saratoga Springs settled on a design which will address its courthouse needs with construction expected to begin in 2017.

## COURT STRUCTURE AND CASELOAD ACTIVITY

**A**rticle VI of the State Constitution specifies the organization and jurisdiction of the courts, establishes the methods for the selection and removal of judges and provides for administrative supervision of the courts. The responsibility and authority of the New York State Unified Court System (UCS) is vested in the Chief Judge, who also serves as Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals, New York's highest court.

The UCS is made up of 11 separate trial courts: New York City Civil, New York City Criminal, City, District, town and village Justice, Supreme, County, Family, Surrogate's and the Court of Claims; the intermediate Appellate Terms and Appellate Divisions; and the Court of Appeals. This chapter describes the jurisdiction of these courts and provides an overview of their 2016 caseload activity.

## APPELLATE COURTS

## COURT OF APPEALS

The Court of Appeals — New York’s highest court — hears civil and criminal appeals. In most cases, the court’s authority is limited to the review of questions of law. Depending on the issue, some matters may be appealed as of right and some only by leave or permission from the court or the Appellate Division. The Court of Appeals also presides over appeals of decisions reached by the State Commission on Judicial Conduct (which reviews allegations of misconduct brought against judges) and sets rules governing the admission of attorneys to the bar. The Court of Appeals consists of the Chief Judge and six Associate Judges appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate to 14-year terms. Five members of the court constitute a quorum, with the agreement of four required for a decision. The court’s caseload activity is reported in TABLE 1.

APPELLATE DIVISION OF THE SUPREME COURT

Below the Court of Appeals is the Appellate Division of state Supreme Court, the mid-level court. For administrative purposes, there are four distinct "departments" of the Appellate Division, listed by county as follows:

First Department	Third Department		Fourth Department	
Bronx	Albany	Rensselaer	Allegany	Seneca
New York	Broome	St. Lawrence	Cattaraugus	Steuben
(Manhattan)	Chemung	Saratoga	Cayuga	Wayne
Second Department	Chenango	Schenectady	Chautauqua	Wyoming
	Clinton	Schoharie	Erie	Yates
Dutchess	Columbia	Schuyler	Genesee	
	Cortland	Sullivan	Herkimer	
Kings	Delaware	Tioga	Jefferson	
Nassau	Essex	Tompkins	Lewis	
Orange	Franklin	Ulster	Livingston	
Putnam	Fulton	Warren	Monroe	
Queens	Greene	Washington	Niagara	
Richmond	Hamilton		Oneida	
Rockland	Madison		Onondaga	
Suffolk	Montgomery		Ontario	
Westchester	Otsego		Oswego	

Their responsibilities include resolving appeals from judgments or orders of the superior courts of original jurisdiction in civil and criminal cases; reviewing civil appeals taken from the Appellate Terms and County Courts acting as appellate tribunals; establishing rules governing attorney conduct; conducting proceedings to admit, suspend or disbar attorneys. Presiding and Associate Justices of each division are selected from the Supreme Court by the Governor. Presiding Justices serve for the remainder of their term; Associate Justices are designated for five-year terms of the remainder of their unexpired terms of office, if less than five years. The Appellate Divisions' caseload activity is listed in TABLE 2.

**TABLE 1: CASELOAD ACTIVITY IN COURT OF APPEALS - 2016**

as of: 8/15/2017

Applications Decided [CPL 460.20(3)(b)]						2,497
Records on Appeal Filed						161
Oral Arguments (Includes Submissions)						187
Appeals Decided						225
Motions Decided						1,232
Judicial Conduct Determinations Reviewed						
DISPOSITIONS OF APPEALS DECIDED IN THE COURT OF APPEALS BY BASIS OF JURISDICTION						
BASIS OF JURISDICTION	AFFIRMED	REVERSED	MODIFIED	DISMISSED	OTHER*	TOTAL
All Cases						
Dissents in Appellate Division	9	4	1	0	0	14
Permission of Court of Appeals or Judge thereof	83	45	5	1	0	134
Permission of Appellate Division or Justice thereof	37	15	5	2	0	59
Constitutional Question	7	0	0	0	0	7
Stipulation for Judgment Absolute	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	1	0	0	10	11
Total	136	65	11	3	10	225
Civil Cases						
Dissents in Appellate Division	9	4	1	0	0	14
Permission of Court of Appeals	28	22	3	1	0	54
Permission of Appellate Division	20	8	4	0	0	32
Constitutional Question	7	0	0	0	0	7
Stipulation for Judgment Absolute	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	1	0	0	10	11
Total	64	35	8	1	10	118
Criminal Cases						
Permission of Court of Appeals Judge	55	23	2	0	0	80
Permission of Appellate Division Justice	17	7	1	2	0	27
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	72	30	3	2	0	107

\*Includes anomalies which did not result in an affirmance, reversal, modification or dismissal (e.g., judicial suspensions, acceptance of a case for review pursuant to Court Rule 500.27)

## APPELLATE TERM OF THE SUPREME COURT, FIRST AND SECOND DEPARTMENTS

The Appellate Terms of the Supreme Court in the First and Second Departments hear appeals from civil and criminal cases originating in New York City's Civil and Criminal Courts. In the Second Department, the Appellate Terms also hear appeals from civil and criminal cases originating in District, City, and town and village Justice Courts. Justices are selected by the Chief Administrative Judge upon approval of the Presiding Justice of the appropriate Appellate Division. The Appellate Terms' caseload activity is listed in TABLE 3

TABLE 2: CASELOAD ACTIVITY IN THE APPELLATE DIVISION - 2016 <span style="float: right;">as of: 8/15/2017</span>									
	FIRST DEPT		SECOND DEPT		THIRD DEPT		FOURTH DEPT		TOTAL
	Civil	Criminal	Civil	Criminal	Civil	Criminal	Civil	Criminal	
<b>Records on Appeal Filed</b>	<b>1,388</b>	<b>838</b>	<b>3,314</b>	<b>741</b>	<b>1,435</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>741</b>	<b>502</b>	<b>9,359</b>
Disposed of before argument or submission (e.g., dismissed, withdrawn, settled)	156	92	6,860	483	0	0	0	0	7,591
Disposed of after argument or submission:									
Affirmed	952	663	1,566	545	704	281	323	397	5,431
Reversed	274	39	605	63	132	42	109	62	1,326
Modified	257	58	267	57	143	27	99	48	956
Dismissed	208	5	388	5	116	2	148	19	891
Other	43	19	94	92	1	0	3	14	266
<b>Total Dispositions</b>	<b>1,890</b>	<b>876</b>	<b>9,780</b>	<b>1,245</b>	<b>1,096</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>682</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>16,461</b>
	FIRST DEPT		SECOND DEPT		THIRD DEPT		FOURTH DEPT		TOTAL
Oral Arguments*	1,453		1,910		650		759		<b>4,772</b>
Motions Decided*	4,633		12,744		7,228		5,062		<b>29,667</b>
Admissions to the Bar	2,406		2,200		3,375		336		<b>8,317</b>
Atty. Disciplinary Proceedings Decided	182		419		87		102		<b>790</b>

\*Not broken down by civil or criminal

TABLE 3: CASELOAD ACTIVITY IN THE APPELLATE TERMS - 2016 <span style="float: right;">as of: 8/15/2017</span>							
	FIRST DEPT			SECOND DEPT			TOTAL
	Civil	Criminal	Total	Civil	Criminal	Total	
<b>Records on Appeal Filed</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>427</b>	<b>1,360</b>	<b>1,513</b>	<b>2,873</b>	<b>3,300</b>
Disposed of before argument or submission (e.g., dismissed, withdrawn, settled)	28	-	28	985	1,086	2,071	2,099
Disposed of after argument or submission:							
Affirmed	113	150	263	290	96	386	649
Reversed	47	49	96	195	42	237	333
Modified	17	6	23	93	5	98	121
Dismissed	26	-	26	21	12	33	59
Other	1	-	1	24	1	25	26
<b>Total Dispositions</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>437</b>	<b>1,608</b>	<b>1,242</b>	<b>2,850</b>	<b>3,287</b>
Oral Arguments*	239			302			541
Motions Decided*	1,859			6,334			8,193

\*Not broken down by civil or criminal



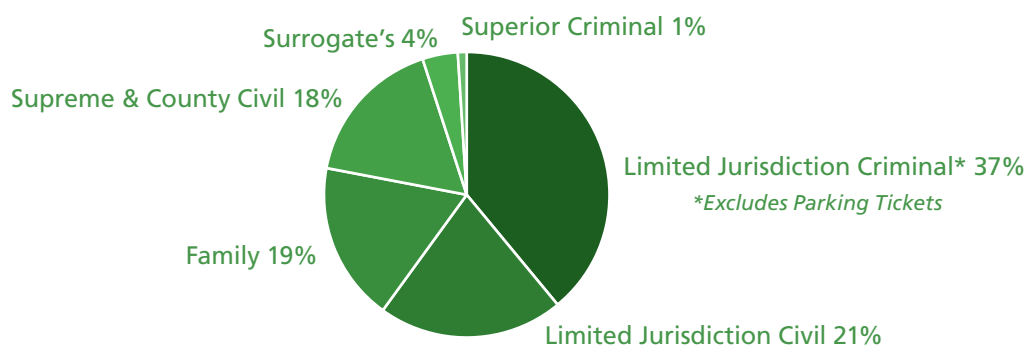
# TRIAL COURTS

In 2016, 3,435,146 cases were filed statewide in the trial courts. Criminal cases (excluding parking tickets) accounted for 37 percent. Civil cases accounted for 39 percent. About 19 percent of the cases were in Family Court and about 4 percent were in Surrogate's Court. TABLE 4 shows total filings in the trial courts over a five-year period. FIGURE A shows the percentage of filings by case type.

TABLE 4: FILINGS IN THE TRIAL COURTS: FIVE-YEAR COMPARISON <span style="float: right;">as of: 8/15/2017</span>					
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
<b>Criminal</b>					
Supreme and County Courts Criminal <sup>a</sup>	69,552	51,857	47,805	45,655	46,067
Criminal Court of the City of NY <sup>b</sup>	851,369	809,868	764,487	622,730	566,145
City & District Courts Outside NYC <sup>b</sup>	707,019	685,488	648,340	642,871	637,044
Parking Tickets	125,778	115,529	115,847	100,059	108,452
<b>Criminal Total</b>	<b>1,753,718</b>	<b>1,662,742</b>	<b>1,576,479</b>	<b>1,411,315</b>	<b>1,357,708</b>
<b>Civil</b>					
Supreme Court Civil <sup>c</sup>	453,846	504,910	491,203	481,719	476,058
Civil Court of the City of NY <sup>d</sup>	616,197	574,347	547,629	528,059	507,389
City & District Courts Outside NYC <sup>d</sup>	253,269	228,379	212,804	190,177	173,574
County Courts Civil <sup>e</sup>	49,573	83,292	54,353	61,617	110,675
Court of Claims	1,526	1,622	1,817	1,894	1,794
Small Claims Assessment Review Program	96,049	66,462	54,041	55,568	46,638
<b>Civil Total</b>	<b>1,470,460</b>	<b>1,459,012</b>	<b>1,361,847</b>	<b>1,319,034</b>	<b>1,316,128</b>
<b>Family<sup>e</sup></b>	<b>698,372</b>	<b>694,975</b>	<b>646,954</b>	<b>640,658</b>	<b>621,107</b>
<b>Surrogate's</b>	<b>136,341</b>	<b>137,249</b>	<b>138,553</b>	<b>139,341</b>	<b>140,203</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,058,891</b>	<b>3,953,978</b>	<b>3,723,833</b>	<b>3,510,348</b>	<b>3,435,146</b>

<sup>a</sup> Includes felonies and misdemeanors, of which 2,928 were misdemeanor filings in 2016.  
<sup>b</sup> NYC includes arrest and summons cases; outside NYC includes arrest cases and uniform traffic tickets.  
<sup>c</sup> Includes new cases, ex parte applications and uncontested matrimonial cases.  
<sup>d</sup> Includes civil, housing, small claims and commercial claims.  
<sup>e</sup> Includes new cases and ex parte applications.

**FIGURE A: TRIAL COURT FILINGS BY CASE TYPE - 2016**

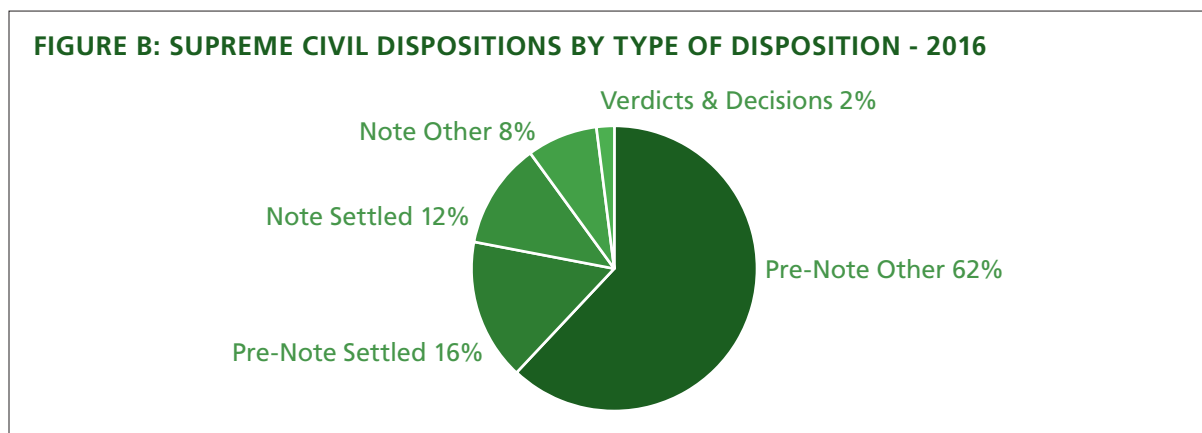


## SUPREME COURT

The Supreme Court generally handles cases outside the authority of the lower courts such as civil matters beyond the monetary limits of the lower courts' jurisdiction; divorce, separation and annulment proceedings; equity suits, such as mortgage foreclosures and injunctions; and criminal prosecutions of felonies. The Commercial Division, which is devoted exclusively to complex business litigation, is part of the Supreme Court. Supreme Court Justices are elected by judicial district to 14-year terms.

During 2016, there were 476,058 civil filings in Supreme Court, including 185,562 new cases, 245,346 ex parte applications and 45,150 uncontested matrimonial cases. A total of 524,073 matters reached disposition. Three standard and goal periods measure the length of time from filing a civil action to disposition. The first or “pre-note” standard measures the time from filing a request for judicial intervention (RJI) — when parties first seek some form of judicial relief — to filing the trial note of issue, indicating readiness for trial. The second or “note” standard measures the time from filing the note of issue to disposition. The third standard covers the entire period from filing the RJI to disposition. The respective time frames are 8-15-23 months for expedited cases; 12-15-27 months for standard cases; and 15-15-30 months for complex cases. In matrimonial cases, the standards are 6-6-12 months; and in tax certiorari cases, 48-15-63 months.

FIGURE B shows the breakdown of Supreme Court civil cases by manner of disposition in 2016.



## COUNTY COURTS

The County Courts, located in each county outside New York City, handle criminal prosecutions of felonies and misdemeanors committed within the county, although in practice most minor offenses are handled by lower courts. County Courts also have limited jurisdiction over civil lawsuits, generally involving claims up to \$25,000. County Courts in the Third and Fourth Departments, while primarily trial courts, hear appeals from cases originating in the City Courts and town and village Justice Courts. County Court Judges are elected to 10-year terms. The statistical data for the County Courts’ felony caseload are reported in combination with the felony caseload data for Supreme Court in TABLE 5.

TABLE 5: SUPREME CRIMINAL & COUNTY COURT - FELONY CASES 2016										as of: 8/15/2017
Location	FILINGS			DISPOSITIONS						
	Total	Indictments	SCI's*	Total	Guilty Pleas	Convictions	Acquittals	Nonjury Verdicts	Dismissals	Other
<b>Total State</b>	<b>43,139</b>	<b>28,090</b>	<b>15,049</b>	<b>46,287</b>	<b>40,322</b>	<b>1,030</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>3,120</b>	<b>1,143</b>
NYC	19,667	15,655	4,012	20,830	17,447	520	223	98	1,934	608
New York	6,226	5,542	996	6,894	5,699	228	75	26	650	216
Bronx	4,189	3,986	379	4,768	3,752	58	53	20	749	136
Kings	4,654	4,145	974	5,150	4,543	117	36	16	306	132
Queens	3,077	1,577	1,424	3,340	2,885	99	55	35	162	104
Richmond	625	405	239	678	568	18	4	1	67	20
ONYC**	23,472	12,435	11,037	25,457	22,875	510	150	201	1,186	535

\*Superior Court Information \*\*Outside New York City

TABLE 5: SUPREME CRIMINAL &amp; COUNTY COURT - FELONY CASES 2016

as of: 8/15/2017

Location	FILINGS			DISPOSITIONS						
	Total	Indictments	SCI's*	Total	Guilty Pleas	Convictions	Acquittals	Nonjury Verdicts	Dismissals	Other
<b>Total State</b>	<b>43,139</b>	<b>28,090</b>	<b>15,049</b>	<b>46,287</b>	<b>40,322</b>	<b>1,030</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>3,120</b>	<b>1,143</b>
Albany	1,078	497	464	1,060	936	29	15	3	56	21
Allegany	89	20	62	111	97	1	0	0	5	8
Broome	756	292	318	669	603	6	5	3	40	12
Cattaraugus	308	197	75	287	268	5	2	2	8	2
Cayuga	198	91	94	193	187	3	0	0	0	3
Chautauqua	370	185	270	451	431	2	0	1	6	11
Chemung	300	252	20	266	231	7	4	4	15	5
Chenango	127	85	53	141	132	1	0	1	6	1
Clinton	264	98	140	261	250	8	0	0	3	0
Columbia	97	33	77	121	106	6	2	0	2	5
Cortland	145	81	100	160	146	2	1	1	5	5
Delaware	87	25	52	80	74	1	0	0	1	4
Dutchess	394	150	264	449	406	10	3	2	22	6
Erie	1,267	513	1,058	1,624	1,490	18	2	57	29	28
Essex	76	24	30	73	70	1	1	0	0	1
Franklin	135	68	47	130	115	8	3	0	4	0
Fulton	147	43	86	140	130	3	0	0	2	5
Genesee	206	91	107	198	189	2	0	2	2	3
Greene	132	45	59	140	125	3	1	0	4	7
Hamilton	9	4	6	10	9	0	0	0	1	0
Herkimer	129	31	76	107	106	0	0	0	1	0
Jefferson	454	132	446	565	556	3	0	2	2	2
Lewis	109	32	72	111	95	2	0	0	4	10
Livingston	275	139	108	257	238	7	2	3	4	3
Madison	147	78	153	182	177	0	1	0	3	1
Monroe	2,034	1,408	475	2,175	1,732	94	33	70	189	57
Montgomery	123	50	77	133	110	1	1	0	4	17
Nassau	2,048	984	1,074	2,436	2,187	51	13	4	142	39
Niagara	381	230	163	396	360	8	2	0	16	10
Oneida	660	512	197	703	665	4	1	2	17	14
Onondaga	1,209	848	483	1,292	1,131	32	11	3	105	10
Ontario	484	203	226	465	433	14	3	2	6	7
Orange	805	501	244	866	799	12	3	2	23	27
Orleans	90	87	9	90	82	1	0	0	4	3
Oswego	303	131	173	311	292	3	2	2	4	8
Otsego	71	49	39	93	90	2	0	0	1	0
Putnam	84	25	61	83	79	0	1	0	3	0
Rensselaer	299	163	93	308	270	10	3	0	21	4
Rockland	602	290	208	628	564	13	8	7	26	10
St. Lawrence	276	95	227	347	327	8	0	0	11	1
Saratoga	287	265	247	534	485	22	1	1	6	19
Schenectady	509	31	33	57	55	0	1	1	0	0
Schoharie	41	57	26	62	56	2	1	1	1	1
Schuyler	38	63	85	147	130	2	1	2	11	1
Seneca	111	59	90	276	239	6	0	0	29	2
Steuben	380	241	130	369	301	9	3	4	27	25
Suffolk	2,905	1,705	979	3,152	2,724	30	11	9	269	109
Sullivan	182	81	129	246	233	7	2	0	0	4

\*Superior Court Information \*\*Outside New York City

**TABLE 5: SUPREME CRIMINAL & COUNTY COURT - FELONY CASES 2016** as of: 8/15/2017

Location	FILINGS			DISPOSITIONS						
	Total	Indictments	SCI's*	Total	Guilty Pleas	Convictions	Acquittals	Nonjury Verdicts	Dismissals	Other
<b>Total State</b>	<b>43,139</b>	<b>28,090</b>	<b>15,049</b>	<b>46,287</b>	<b>40,322</b>	<b>1,030</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>3,120</b>	<b>1,143</b>
Tioga	105	55	55	104	99	1	0	2	1	1
Tompkins	196	81	101	182	161	5	0	0	12	4
Ulster	313	190	127	259	241	7	5	0	6	0
Warren	213	78	141	248	237	6	0	0	3	2
Washington	170	115	45	172	163	0	0	0	8	1
Wayne	183	97	48	148	139	5	0	0	2	2
Westchester	1,037	375	714	1,098	1,049	25	1	6	7	10
Wyoming	172	118	73	207	196	0	1	2	6	2
Yates	91	42	28	84	79	2	0	0	1	2

\*Superior Court Information \*\*Outside New York City

## COURT OF CLAIMS

The Court of Claims is a statewide court with exclusive authority over lawsuits involving monetary claims against the State of New York or certain other state-related entities such as the New York State Thruway, the City University of New York and the New York State Power Authority (claims for the appropriation of real property only). The Court hears cases at nine locations around the state. Cases are heard without juries. Court of Claims Judges are appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate to nine-year terms. During 2016, 1,794 claims were filed and 2,097 were decided.

## SURROGATE'S COURT

The Surrogate's Court, located in every county of the state, hears cases involving the affairs of the deceased, including the validity of wills and the administration of estates. These courts are also authorized to handle adoptions. Surrogate's Court Judges are elected to 10-year terms in each county outside New York City, and to 14-year terms in all New York City counties. See TABLE 6 for 2016 filings and dispositions by case type.

**TABLE 6: SURROGATE'S COURT FILINGS & DISPOSITIONS: PROCEEDINGS BY CASE TYPE - 2016** as of: 8/15/2017

Case Type	TOTAL STATE		NYC		OUTSIDE NYC	
	Filings	Dispositions*	Filings	Dispositions*	Filings	Dispositions*
<b>Total</b>	<b>140,203</b>	<b>113,011</b>	<b>36,740</b>	<b>36,141</b>	<b>103,463</b>	<b>76,870</b>
Probate	40,106	43,542	11,141	12,494	28,965	31,048
Administration	16,225	18,117	6,748	7,397	9,477	10,720
Voluntary Admin.	25,184	25,184	7,778	7,778	17,406	17,406
Accounting	30,107	4,784	3,600	1,726	26,507	3,058
Inter Vivos Trust	1,299	1,254	140	220	1,159	1,034
Miscellaneous	9,572	9,584	2,681	3,786	6,891	5,798
Guardianship	16,676	8,658	4,497	2,477	12,179	6,181
Adoption	994	1,843	154	262	840	1,581
Estate Tax	40	45	1	1	39	44

\*Includes orders and decrees signed.

## FAMILY COURT

The Family Court, located in every county of the state, hears matters involving children and families, including adoption, guardianship, foster care approval and review, juvenile delinquency, family violence, child abuse and neglect, custody and visitation, and child support. Family Court Judges in New York City are appointed to 10-year terms by the Mayor. Family Court Judges outside New York City are elected to 10-year terms. See TABLE 7 for a breakdown of Family Court filings and dispositions. This table also contains filings and dispositions for the state's Integrated Domestic Violence (IDV) Courts.

**TABLE 7: FAMILY & SUPREME COURT (IDV) FILINGS & DISPOSITIONS  
BY TYPE OF PETITION - 2016**

*as of: 8/15/2017*

Type of Petition	TOTAL STATE		NYC		OUTSIDE NYC	
	Filings	Dispositions	Filings	Dispositions	Filings	Dispositions
<b>Total</b>	<b>621,107</b>	<b>629,534</b>	<b>212,904</b>	<b>217,720</b>	<b>408,203</b>	<b>411,814</b>
Termination of Parental Rights	3,365	3,246	955	966	2,410	2,280
Surrender of Child	2,193	2,142	560	556	1,633	1,586
Child Protective (Neglect & Abuse)	42,080	40,364	12,370	10,472	29,710	29,892
Juvenile Delinquency	9,440	9,645	3,138	3,360	6,302	6,285
Designated Felony	291	196	133	73	158	123
Persons in Need of Supervision	4,220	4,506	716	779	3,504	3,727
Adoption	2,897	2,906	1,199	1,241	1,698	1,665
Adoption Certification	229	224	62	57	167	167
Guardianship	10,164	10,280	3,906	4,098	6,258	6,182
Custody/Visitation	193,925	194,592	54,745	55,267	139,180	139,325
Foster Care Review	81	78	40	33	41	45
Foster Care Placement	690	677	395	393	295	284
Family Offense	60,834	59,638	24,120	23,690	36,714	35,948
Paternity	27,977	29,696	14,188	15,489	13,789	14,207
Support	214,121	222,097	70,979	75,256	143,142	146,841
Uniform Interstate Family Support Act	8,190	8,894	3,953	4,555	4,237	4,339
Consent to Marry	5	6	0	1	5	5
Other	2,104	2,046	108	97	1,996	1,949
Permanency Planning Hearings Held	38,301	38,301	21,337	21,337	16,964	16,964

## THE CIVIL COURT OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

The Civil Court of the City of New York has jurisdiction over civil cases involving amounts up to \$25,000. It includes small claims and commercial claims parts for the informal resolution of matters involving amounts up to \$5,000, and a housing part for landlord-tenant proceedings. New York City Civil Court Judges are elected to 10-year terms; housing judges are appointed by the Chief Administrative Judge to five-year terms. TABLE 8 shows the breakdown of filings and dispositions by case type and county.

TABLE 8: NEW YORK CITY CIVIL COURT: FILINGS & DISPOSITIONS BY CASE TYPE AND COUNTY - 2016								
	CIVIL ACTIONS		HOUSING		SMALL CLAIMS		COMMERCIAL CLAIMS	
	Filing <sup>a</sup>	Dispositions <sup>b</sup>	Filing <sup>a</sup>	Dispositions <sup>b</sup>	Filing	Dispositions	Filing	Dispositions
<b>New York City</b>	<b>223,810</b>	<b>146,040</b>	<b>259,899</b>	<b>227,009</b>	<b>18,346</b>	<b>23,100</b>	<b>5,334</b>	<b>6,282</b>
New York	33,451	33,964	53,350	44,306	4,417	5,601	1,385	1,818
Bronx	32,154	33,966	92,168	81,294	2,963	3,650	743	873
Kings	94,398	39,931	70,578	61,286	5,286	6,331	1,193	1,232
Queens	40,333	25,119	38,465	35,402	4,532	6,336	1,305	1,651
Richmond	23,474	13,060	5,338	4,721	1,148	1,182	708	708

*The large difference between the number of filings and dispositions is due to the number of cases filed but never pursued by the filing party.*

<sup>a</sup> Includes both answered and unanswered cases.

<sup>b</sup> Includes courtroom dispositions and default judgments.

## THE CRIMINAL COURT OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

The Criminal Court Of The City Of New York handles misdemeanors and violations. New York City Criminal Court Judges also conduct felony arraignments and other preliminary (pre-indictment) felony proceedings. They are appointed by the Mayor to 10-year terms. During 2016, 73 percent of the arrests were misdemeanors, with 46 percent of all cases reaching disposition by plea. Another 42 percent were dismissed; 4 percent were sent to the grand jury; 7 percent were disposed of by other means; and 1 percent pled to a superior court information. TABLE 9 shows filings and dispositions by county for both arrest cases and summons cases (cases in which an appearance ticket, returnable in court, is issued to the defendant).

TABLE 9: NEW YORK CITY CRIMINAL COURT: FILINGS & DISPOSITIONS BY CASE TYPE AND COUNTY - 2016				
	ARREST CASES		SUMMONS CASES	
	Filings	Dispositions	Filings*	Dispositions
<b>New York City</b>	<b>280,329</b>	<b>285,565</b>	<b>285,816</b>	<b>260,175</b>
New York	80,352	82,894	73,286	65,566
Bronx	56,294	59,830	61,617	57,744
Kings	78,474	78,326	80,748	73,266
Queens	54,602	54,781	57,175	49,858
Richmond	10,607	9,734	12,990	13,741

\*Includes both answered and unanswered cases.

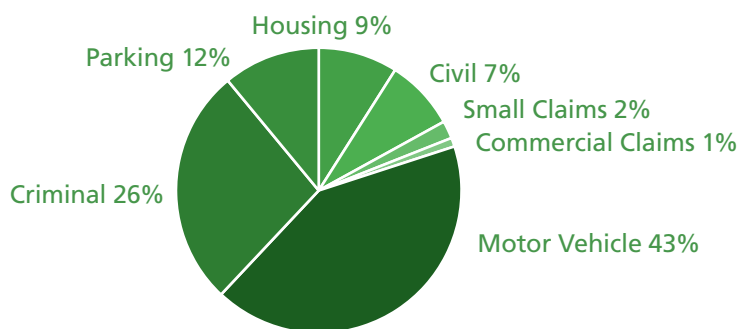
## CITY COURTS

City Courts arraign felonies and handle misdemeanors and lesser offenses as well as civil lawsuits involving claims up to \$15,000. Some City Courts have small claims parts for the informal disposition of matters involving claims up to \$5,000 and/or housing parts to handle landlord-tenant matters and housing violations. City Court Judges are either elected or appointed, depending on the city, with full-time City Court Judges serving 10-year terms and part-time City Court Judges serving six-year terms.

## DISTRICT COURTS

District Courts, located in Nassau County and the five western towns of Suffolk County, arraign felonies and handle misdemeanors and lesser offenses as well as civil lawsuits involving claims up to \$15,000. District Court Judges are elected to six-year terms. In 2016, there were a total of 919,070 filings and 926,607 dispositions in the City and District Courts. FIGURE C shows filings by case type; TABLE 10 contains a breakdown of filings by location and case type.

**FIGURE C: CITY & DISTRICT COURT FILINGS BY CASE TYPE – 2016**



**TABLE 10: CITY AND DISTRICT COURTS: FILINGS BY CASE TYPE - 2016**

Total Filings: 919,070

Location	Criminal	MV	Parking	Civil	Small Claims	L&T	Commercial
<b>Total</b>	<b>241,117</b>	<b>395,927</b>	<b>108,452</b>	<b>67,069</b>	<b>19,436</b>	<b>79,776</b>	<b>7,293</b>
Albany	5,966	18,046	0	2,093	475	5,314	113
Amsterdam	963	2,528	45	389	92	175	24
Auburn	1,351	2,173	258	339	201	943	54
Batavia	971	1,982	22	139	79	141	59
Beacon	728	4,159	316	137	66	165	25
Binghamton	4,367	6,746	142	1,067	304	1,492	162
Buffalo	18,540	11,553	88	3,243	1,886	9,409	612
Canandaigua	733	2,440	18	242	77	106	32
Cohoes	932	2,271	5	257	41	421	2
Corning	633	1,447	42	702	49	71	18
Cortland	1,708	2,566	693	279	99	333	31
Dunkirk	829	810	226	138	85	120	28
Elmira	2,067	1,984	2,515	890	152	687	30
Fulton	920	1,833	1	257	71	185	10
Geneva	640	2,443	2	105	33	126	0
Glen Cove	976	4,448	3,458	12	56	206	18
Glens Falls	829	2,323	200	486	110	136	45
Gloversville	1,152	1,421	31	661	83	295	39
Hornell	671	1,580	0	98	41	88	20
Hudson	506	1,187	1	166	63	113	68
Ithaca	3,250	3,724	0	195	131	124	19
Jamestown	3,444	2,371	589	687	148	441	105



TABLE 10: CITY AND DISTRICT COURTS: FILINGS BY CASE TYPE - 2016							Total Filings: 919,070
Location	Criminal	MV	Parking	Civil	Small Claims	L&T	Commercial
<b>Total</b>	<b>241,117</b>	<b>395,927</b>	<b>108,452</b>	<b>67,069</b>	<b>19,436</b>	<b>79,776</b>	<b>7,293</b>
Johnstown	414	368	13	226	42	64	9
Kingston	1,821	4,965	61	812	152	1,039	54
Lackawanna	1,255	5,328	0	218	148	1,517	45
Little Falls	217	516	0	171	132	24	30
Lockport	1,082	3,875	124	721	180	314	48
Long Beach	2,311	4,033	10,888	18	74	176	8
Mechanicville	395	1,690	2	205	60	73	95
Middletown	3,297	5,464	264	585	158	574	69
Mount Vernon	3,587	6,750	0	391	275	2,825	56
New Rochelle	3,299	12,066	72,437	1,766	290	1,263	60
Newburgh	3,214	5,224	37	407	182	903	33
Niagara Falls	3,628	9,845	2,309	849	221	1,400	18
North Tonawanda	1,099	6,250	4	201	108	181	52
Norwich	447	467	52	283	66	76	61
Ogdensburg	852	881	1	281	103	60	95
Olean	844	2,353	52	119	105	159	45
Oneida	825	1,987	125	615	58	109	31
Oneonta	700	830	261	198	112	47	18
Oswego	1,399	2,968	1	351	172	129	17
Peekskill	1,556	5,781	0	124	144	320	32
Plattsburgh	1,209	3,125	14	146	109	158	94
Port Jervis	1,575	2,617	3	76	49	203	7
Poughkeepsie	1,876	5,435	1,926	587	284	1,595	60
Rensselaer	304	692	38	285	53	117	38
Rochester	11,952	6,692	0	1,998	1,653	8,301	367
Rome	2,391	9,139	0	555	150	342	13
Rye	554	6,304	485	25	70	16	40
Salamanca	678	1,638	0	72	54	56	17
Saratoga Springs	1,868	4,762	367	199	195	113	91
Schenectady	4,921	9,828	2	786	383	2,769	88
Sherrill	45	114	0	52	20	5	0
Syracuse	13,340	26,509	0	4,215	823	5,328	191
Tonawanda	849	4,880	73	182	114	116	81
Troy	2,320	7,747	19	1,264	216	3,601	33
Utica	6,344	13,568	2	890	278	1,114	183
Watertown	2,046	5,539	0	613	178	514	87
Watervliet	622	4,354	4	287	49	364	10
White Plains	2,813	20,911	6,640	276	384	834	141
Yonkers	11,279	17,576	0	679	470	6,601	166
Nassau District	31,317	36,172	179	14,555	3,388	6,736	1,631
Suffolk District	58,396	46,649	3,417	18,204	3,392	8,549	1,565

## TOWN AND VILLAGE JUSTICE COURT

Town and Village Justice Courts handle misdemeanors and lesser offenses as well as civil lawsuits involving claims up to \$3,000 (including small claims cases). While the majority of cases handled by these courts are minor traffic offenses, drunk-driving cases and zoning violations, town and village Justice Court Judges also conduct preliminary felony proceedings. There are approximately 1,277 Justice Courts and 2,200 Town and Village Justices. Town and Village Judges are elected to four-year terms. Most are not attorneys; non-attorney justices must complete a certification course and participate in ongoing judicial education.

# ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

**T**he New York State Unified Court System is administered by the Office of Court Administration (OCA) under the authority of the Chief Judge. OCA provides financial management, automation, public safety, personnel management and other essential services to support day-to-day court operations. OCA comprises the following divisions:

- **Division of Administrative Services** purchases goods and services, procures contracts, processes revenues and manages accounts;
- **Division of Financial Management** prepares the judiciary budget and formulates and implements fiscal policies;
- **Division of Human Resources** is responsible for personnel and benefits administration and providing education and training programs to the nonjudicial and uniformed workforce. The Division also administers equal employment opportunity policies and programs and negotiates with the court system's labor unions. The Division works directly with judges, employees, court administrators and union representatives regarding all components of employment cycle including entitlements and resources associated with retirement;
- **Division of Professional and Court Services** provides support and guidance to trial court operations including alternative dispute resolution and court improvement programs, court interpreting services, legal information, records management, and operational issues related to the American Disabilities Act;
- **Division of Technology** provides automation and telecommunications services to all courts and agencies, including oversight of the statewide Domestic Violence Registry and the courts' technical support center.

In addition,

- **Communications Office** coordinates communications, serves as liaison with the media and facilitates public information programs.
- **Counsel's Office** prepares and analyzes legislation and represents the Unified Court System in litigation;
- **Department of Public Safety** is responsible for developing and implementing uniform policies and procedures to ensure the safety and accessibility of our state courthouses;
- **Inspector General's Office** is responsible for the investigation and elimination of infractions of discipline standards, conflicts of interest and criminal activities on the part of non-judicial employees and individuals or corporations doing business with the courts;
- **Office of Court Facilities Management** provides oversight to localities in relation to the maintenance, renovation and construction of court facilities;
- **Office of Court Research** provides caseload activity statistics, jury system support and operations re-search to all UCS courts;
- **Office of Internal Affairs** conducts internal audits and investigations to support the attainment of long-term UCS goals;
- **Office of Justice Court Support** provides oversight to town and village Justice Courts;
- **Office of Workforce Diversity** promotes and supports diversity in hiring and promotion in the court system's workforce, and promotes practices that ensure a bias free work place.

# FISCAL OVERVIEW

## UNIFIED COURT SYSTEM 2016-2017 BUDGET

The Unified Court System is based upon a fiscal year totaling \$544,155,437, a figure which includes all state, county and city remedies, but does not include bail or other trusts. A portion of this revenue included fees for services provided by the court system's Criminal History Search Unit, which since 2003 has sold statewide criminal history public records that include felony and misdemeanor convictions from all 62 counties. By law, the Office of Court Administration is solely responsible for the sale of such records produced by a search of its electronic database, charging a \$65 fee per name and date of birth searched. The revenue generated from each search request is allocated as follows: \$16 to the Office of Court Administration's Judiciary Data Processing Offset Fund; \$35 to the Indigent Legal Services Fund; \$9 to the Legal Services Fund; and \$5 to the General Fund. In 2016, the Criminal History Search Unit received \$152,232,347 for criminal history search records.

## REVENUES COLLECTED FOR THE YEAR 2016

Under Section 486-a of the Judiciary Law and the Rules of the Chief Administrative Judge (22NYCRR Part 118), every attorney admitted to practice in New York must file a biennial registration form. Attorneys actively practicing law in New York State or elsewhere must, upon registering, pay a \$375 fee, allocated as follows: \$60 to the Lawyers' Fund for Client Protection to support programs providing restitution to clients of dishonest attorneys; \$50 to the Indigent Legal Services Fund to cover fees of lawyers serving on 18-b panels representing indigent defendants; \$25 to the Legal Services Assistance Funds; and the balance to the Attorney Licensing Fund to cover the cost of the Appellate Division attorney admission and disciplinary programs. In 2016, the court system collected \$50,837,509 in attorney registration fees.

# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

The Office of Counsel is the principal representative of the Unified Court System in the legislative process. In this role, it is responsible for developing the Judiciary's legislative program and for providing the legislative and executive branches with analyses and recommendations concerning legislative measures that may have an impact on the courts and their administrative operations. It also serves a liaison function with bar association committees, judicial associations and other groups, public and private, with respect to changes in court-related statutory law.

Counsel's Office staffs the Chief Administrative Judge's advisory committees on civil practice, criminal law and procedure, family law, estates and trusts, matrimonial practice and the local courts. Annually, these committees formulate legislative proposals in their respective areas of concern and expertise for submission to the Chief Administrative Judge. When approved by the latter, they are transmitted to the Legislature, in bill form, for sponsors and legislative consideration.

Each advisory committee also analyzes other legislative proposals during the legislative session. Recommendations are submitted to the Chief Administrative Judge, who, through Counsel, relays them to the Legislature and the Executive sometimes by informal means and sometimes more formally by legislative memoranda or letters to Governor's Counsel.

Counsel's Office also is responsible for drafting legislative measures to implement recommendations made by the Chief Judge in the State of the Judiciary message, as well as measures required by the Unified Court System, including budget requests and measures to implement collective bargaining

agreements negotiated with court employee unions pursuant to the Taylor Law. In addition, Counsel's Office analyzes other legislative measures that have potential impact on the administrative operation of the courts and makes recommendations thereon to the Legislature and the Executive.

In discharge of its legislation-related duties, Counsel's Office consults frequently with legislators, professional staff of legislative committees and the Governor's Counsel for the purposes of generating support for the Judiciary's legislative program and of providing technical assistance in the development of court-related proposals initiated by the executive and legislative branches.

During the 2016 legislative session, Counsel's Office, with the assistance of the Chief Administrative Judge's advisory committees, prepared and submitted 33 measures for legislative consideration. Ultimately, 10 measures written or inspired by OCA were enacted into law. Also during the 2016 session, Counsel's Office furnished Counsel to the Governor with analyses and recommendations on 16 measures awaiting executive action.

## **MEASURES ENACTED INTO LAW IN 2016**

**Chapter 37 (Senate 6858/Assembly 9518).** Amends the Domestic Relations Law, the Family Court Act, the Executive Law and the Social Services Law to substitute the term "intellectual disability" for "mental retardation." Eff. 5/25/16.

**Chapter 47 (Senate 7254/Assembly 9572).** Amends the Surrogate's Court Procedure Act in relation to service of process upon limited liability corporations and limited liability partnerships. Eff. 6/1/16.

**Chapter 48 (Senate 7351/Assembly 9686).** Amends the Judiciary Law to extend authority for the use of JHOs and court referees to issue orders of protection. Eff. 6/1/16.

**Chapter 51 (Senate 6401-A/Assembly 9001-A).** Enacts the 2016-17 Judiciary Budget. Eff. 4/1/16.

**Chapter 198 (Senate 7132-A/Assembly 2125-A).** Amends the Surrogate's Court Procedure Act to remove all reference to "mentally retarded" or "mental retardation" from the Act and replace them with current and more appropriate language in relation to the guardianship of people who are intellectually disabled and people who are developmentally disabled. Eff. 7/21/16.

**Chapter 205 (Senate 7328/Assembly 10130).** Amends the Uniform Justice Court Act in relation to merging town justice courts; permits the towns of Erin and Chemung to consolidate their courts. Eff. 7/21/16.

**Chapter 242 (Senate 6859/Assembly 9759).** Amends the Family Court Act and the Social Services Law to clarify the criteria and procedures for youth to have contact with siblings in child protective, permanency and termination of parental rights proceedings. Eff. 11/16/16.

**Chapter 259 (Senate 7567/Assembly 9918-A).** Amends the Village Law and Criminal Procedure Law in relation to changing the title of acting justice to associate justice. Eff. 8/19/16.

**Chapter 262 (Senate 7807/Assembly 10357).** Amends the Civil Practice Law and Rules to extend to an attorney (or his or her employee), in an action involving a revocable trust where the grantor thereof has died, the same evidentiary privilege as to the preparation, execution or revocation of such trust as is now enjoyed by an attorney as to the preparation, execution or revocation of a will in an action involving a will. Eff. 8/19/16.

**Chapter 282 (Senate 7402/Assembly 10039).** Amends the Town Law and the Public Officers Law to authorize the town justice of the town of Allen, in the county of Allegany, to be a nonresident of such town. Eff. 8/23/16.

**Chapter 354 (Senate 7604-A/Assembly 9910-A).** Amends the Estates, Powers and Trusts Law to give fiduciaries authority to gain access to, manage, distribute and copy or delete digital assets in the administration of an estate. Eff. 9/29/16.

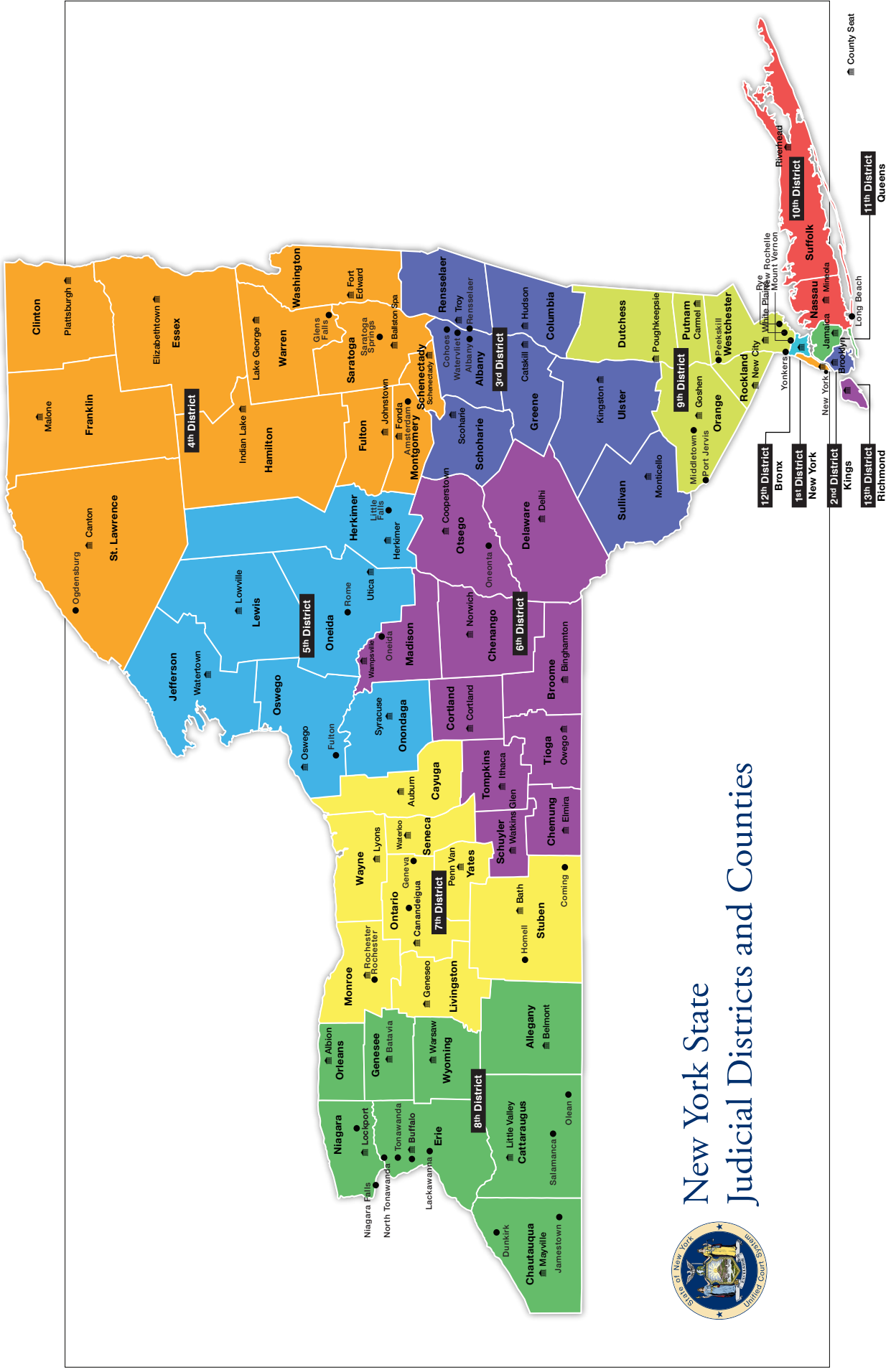
**Chapter 356 (Senate 1606-B/Assembly 10071).** Amends the Judiciary Law to provide judicial wellness or assistance committees with the same measure of confidentiality as now is enjoyed by lawyer assistance committees. Eff. 9/29/16.

**Chapter 365 (Senate 5189/Assembly 7253).** Amends the Domestic Relations Law to provide additional enforcement mechanisms for collection of spousal or child support. Eff. 9/29/16.

**Chapter 459 (Senate 7246/Assembly 9522).** Amends the Criminal Procedure Law to authorize a criminal trial court to grant poor person status for the assignment of appellate counsel at the time of sentence. Eff. 11/25/16.

**Chapter 487 (Senate 6865-A/Assembly 9711-A).** Amends the Public Officers Law and Civil Practice Law and Rules to limit the amount of time to appeal certain judgments regarding freedom of information violations. Eff. 5/27/17.

**Chapter 492 (Senate 7209-A/Assembly 10360).** Amends the Criminal Procedure Law, the Judiciary Law and the Uniform Justice Court Act to authorize the establishment of off-hours arraignment parts in counties outside New York City. Eff. 2/26/17.



# New York State Judicial Districts and Counties



